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Examining the Effects of Changing Students' Attitudes and School Ecology on Bullying Behavior

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Examining the Effects of Changing Students' Attitudes and School Ecology on Bullying Behavior

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Examining the Effects of Changing Students' Attitudes and School Ecology on Bullying Behavior

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The current focus in bullying intervention programs has shifted from the traditional attention to bullies or victims of aggression in isolation, and instead focused on systemically targeting the ecology in which the behavior occurs. This study sought to determine if a six session classroom intervention coupled with a teacher education program was sufficient to alter the attitudes and behaviors related to overt aggression of fourth grade students. The treatment manual for this intervention was developed following a review of the literature on ecological intervention for overt and social/relational aggression.

The objectives of the study's treatment program were to reduce bullying behaviors through an ecological approach by: 1) educating students on types of bullying (physical and social), the role of the bystander in contributing to the existence of bullying, and the consequences for individuals and the classroom environment when

bullying occurs; 2) challenging sympathetic attitudes about the appropriateness of bullying; 3) providing students with strategies for intervening when they observe bullying; 4) modeling bystander interventions; 5) giving students an opportunity to practice bystander interventions; and 6) empowering classrooms to develop a code of conduct for working together to reduce bullying.

Participants were 71 fourth grade students from a Central Texas elementary school. Participants completed self-report measures on attitudes related to the appropriateness of aggression and a peer-ratings measure of their classmates' frequency of prosocial behavior and overt aggression. Research questions sought to determine whether participants in the intervention would demonstrate: 1) decreased attitudes favorable to aggression; 2) increased prosocial behavior; and 3) reduced overt aggression. Results of the study supported the hypothesis of reductions in participants' peer-rated overt aggression but did not support hypotheses of reduced favorable attitudes towards aggression and increased peer-rated prosocial behavior. A supplementary analysis found that participants rated as most overtly aggressive by their peers demonstrated significant reductions in overt aggression following intervention. Implications and limitations of the study's findings are provided.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

"There is a growing problem of bullying in Texas schools…"

--Judith Zaffarini
Texas State Senator
Laredo-D

Senator Zaffarini made this remark on March 22, 2005 as part of Texas Senate Bill 152, the Bullying Prevention Act (senate.state.tx.us)**,** which requires school districts to revise their school management programs in order to better prevent bullying, abuse, and harassment at school. The bill came in response to increased public concern over school safety spawned by a recent tragedy in Minnesota in which a child who had previously experienced harassment responded by killing several students before taking his own life. Unfortunately, the violent consequences of bullying associated with this case are not unique. A report released by the National Threat Assessment Center (Vossekuil, Reddy, Fein, Borum, & Modzeleski, 2000) found that two thirds of school shooters had records of having been bullied or harassed at school.

Bullying has been characterized as the repeated victimization of an individual through exposure to negative actions on the part of one or more other individuals (Olweus, 1991), and may occur as the most frequent type of school violence (Swearer & Doll, 2001). While most bullying does not end with a shooting or similar shocking outcome, the consequences of this phenomenon are important nonetheless. Prevalence rates for school-age children experiencing bullying vary widely, with previous research indicating a range of approximately 10% (Salmivalli, Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, Osterman,

& Kaukiainen, 1996) to upwards of 75% (Hoover, Oliver, & Hazler, 1992). It has been estimated that 160,000 students miss school daily out of fear of being bullied (Fried & Fried, 1996).

To date, much of the research on childhood bullying in the United States has focused on the consequences of the behavior for both aggressors and victims. Mental health outcomes for the victims of bullying have been well documented with these children showing high incidences of mental distress and the tendency to develop a passive coping style or learned helplessness (Swearer, Song, Cary, Eagle, & Mickelson, 2001). Although most research regarding the connection between aggression and mental health problems has focused on victims, there have been studies linking depression and anxiety with aggressive children as well (e.g. Kalttiala-Heino, R., Rimpela, M., Marttunen, M., Rimpela, A., & Rantanen, P., 1999). In addition, both victims and aggressors have been found to evidence suicidal ideation and more frequent attempts to commit suicide. Not surprisingly, both groups also report increased rates of unhappiness related to school when compared to their peers. (Swearer et al., 2001).

Drawing upon an ecological systems perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), current research on bullying has departed from the traditional focus on bullies or victims of aggression in isolation, and instead focused on the context in which the behavior occurs. The systemic influence of the role of peers has become increasingly the focus of school-based bullying research. Craig and Pepler (1995) discuss the powerful role of the "bystander" in bullying incidents and conceptualize bullying itself to occur as "the product of the collective" (pg. 89) with bullies deriving power from the support of others

directly or indirectly involved. Those peers who had traditionally been ignored in bullying research serve an important function in providing attention and respect as a reinforcer for bullying behavior in addition to a cumulative devaluation of the victim (Pellegrini, Bartini, & Brooks, 1999). Likewise, Salmivalli et al., (1996) found that bullying occurs as a group process, as many children who do not meet the traditional definitions of "bully" or "victim" exhibit behaviors that contribute to the likelihood of bullying in their classrooms.

Another area of promising research has focused on the relationship between classroom normative beliefs on the acceptability of aggression and occurrences of bullying. In a study on third grade and sixth grade classrooms, students' collective belief about the acceptability of aggressive behavior was found to be a significant predictor of both individual aggressive behavior and beliefs regarding aggression (Henry, Guerra, & Huesmann, 2000). Greater stability of classroom norms was found in the sixth grade sample, suggesting that beliefs regarding aggression become increasingly solidified as children progress through the elementary school years.

Although recent research on classroom attitudes related to aggression and participant roles in bullying incidents has advanced the understanding of ecological processes that sustain bullying, little has been known about the potential for intervention to alter these processes. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of an intervention aimed at reducing bullying behavior by changing fourth grade classroom ecology. Specifically, changing the beliefs and behavior of children who act as reinforcers of bullying has the potential to change the behavior of aggressors if the

expectation of reward for aggressors is reduced. Preventive interventions targeting preadolescent children in the fourth grade has both theoretical and empirical support as this developmental period has been found to be a critical stage for altering the trajectory of aggressive behaviors (Coie et al., 1993). Reaching youth that are in school and not yet exhibiting clinical levels of acting out behavior can prevent violence and has numerous secondary benefits including the sense of improved school safety and educational environment for all students.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Aggression in Youth

In order to best address the issue of aggression in youth it is important to establish a clear definition of the behavior. Within the literature on childhood externalizing behaviors, the terms anger, antisocial behavior, aggression, violence, and bullying are used relatively interchangeably with little explanation of the distinctions between them. In order to best conceptualize bullying, it is important to clarify the differences between these interrelated yet distinct terms.

Nelson and Finch (2000) define anger as "an intense emotional response to frustration or provocation, characterized by heightened automatic arousal, changes in nervous system activity, and cognitive labeling of the physiological arousal as anger" (pg. 132). Antisocial acts in children may result from the emotional experience of anger and include aggression, theft, vandalism, truancy, running away, lying, and other behaviors that violate major social rules (Kazdin, Siegel, & Bass, 1992). Aggressive acts are specific antisocial acts that can be characterized as behavior that intentionally inflicts bodily or mental harm on others (Loeber & Hay, 1997), and can be considered one potential overt expression of the subjective experience of anger (Nelson & Fitch, 2000). Violence is a more serious form of aggression and is defined as serious harm committed onto another, including assault, rape, robbery and homicide (Loeber & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1998).

Studies on aggression indicate that there are two types of the externalizing behavior. Reactive aggression is defined as a defensive response to perceived provocation

that is accompanied by a feeling of anger, whereas proactive aggression is a goal-directed, deliberate act that may not have an affective component (Crick & Dodge, 1996). It has been posited that reactive aggression stems from experienced frustrations, and that the degree of aversive experience activates a corresponding level of desire to hurt others. Proactive aggression is explainable by social learning theory, in which aggression is instrumentally motivated and controlled by external rewards and reinforcement (Bandura, 1973). Proactive and reactive aggression appear to be distinct, yet highly correlated factors within individuals that stem from underlying deficits or distortions in social-information processing (Crick and Dodge, 1996).

Bullying is a form of proactive aggression as it is goal-directed behavior intended to satisfy interrelated motives including satisfaction in feeling powerful and inflicting suffering on others. Additional perceived benefits from bullying include social prestige or money taken from victims (Olweus, 1993). There exists a wide range of definitions for bullying, but certain features of the phenomenon are recurrent. In a review of the international bullying literature, Griffin and Gross (2003) found five features to be consistent. The features are: 1. the bully intends to cause harm or instill fear in the victim; 2. bullies tend to target the same victims repeatedly; 3. the victim has not done anything to provoke the bully; 4. inherent to the process of bullying is a power differential in which the victim has less perceived power than the bully; and 5. bullying occurs within the social context.

The various terms used to describe this category of externalizing behaviors are clearly connected and often overlap, resulting in multiple words being used to describe

the same behavior (i.e. antisocial behavior, overt aggression, bullying, etc.). This study will be focusing on the overt expression of proactive aggression which frequently takes the form of bullying in the school setting. The terms aggression, overt aggression, proactive aggression, and bullying will be used throughout this paper.

Diagnostic Classifications of Aggression

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, fourth edition (DSM-IV) provides useful criteria for evaluating individuals with pathological behavior across the aggression spectrum. One such behavior is conduct disorder. Conduct disorder is characterized as a repetitive and persistent pattern of behavior in which the basic rights of others or major-age appropriate societal norms or rules are violated. In order for a diagnosis of conduct disorder to be made, three or more of the following characteristics must be present during the previous 12 months with at least one behavior occurring in the previous 6 months: aggressive conduct that causes or threatens physical harm to other people or animals, non-aggressive conduct that causes property loss or damage, deceitfulness or theft, and serious violations of rules.

Other aggressive disorders include oppositional defiant disorder and antisocial personality disorder. Oppositional defiant disorder (ODD) may precede conduct disorder or exist in isolation, and typically manifests before age 8. Within this disorder there is a recurrent pattern of defiant, negative, disobedient, and hostile behavior towards authority figures. Antisocial personality disorder is an adult disorder and is similar to conduct disorder as both involve disregard for the rights of others and/or the violation of major age-appropriate societal rules. A history of some of the symptoms of conduct disorder

must have been present prior to the age of 15 if a diagnosis of anti-social personality disorder is to be made.

Developmental Course

Aggressive behavior is prevalent among young children creating some difficulty in differentiating normative aggression from more serious aggression or bullying (Coie & Dodge, 1998). However, individual differences in degree (i.e. number of incidents) and intensity (i.e. potential for causing harm) of aggression have been empirically demonstrated with very young children (Hanish et al., 2004). Crowther, Bond, and Rolf (1981) found prevalence rates for three, four, and five year old children to decline as children grew older, with boys exhibiting approximately twice the rate of aggression as girls at each age

Retrospective studies with individuals victimized by bullying in childhood have found that victimization was recalled as being most significant during the age range of eleven to thirteen years of age. A number of explanations have been advanced for the prominence of bullying during this developmental period. Eslea and Reas (2001) suggest that bullying may simply be at its worst during this time while Astor et al., (2002) posit that the number of victims decreases during adolescence as bullies focus on specific individuals to target.

A recent area of bullying research has put forward the idea that in addition to bullies and victims there are also bully-victims. These children exhibit aggressive behaviors towards others while also being victimized. In a study with kindergarten children, it was found that 6% of participants were non-aggressive victims of aggression

while 10% of participants were both aggressive and victimized (Alsaker & Valkanover, 2001). These findings indicate that not only did bully-victims exist, but this group constituted a larger percentage of kindergarten participants than traditional non-aggressive victims. In similarly designed studies with fourth and sixth graders these prevalence rates more than reversed, with non-aggressive victims constituting approximately 11% of participants and aggressive victims only 4.5% (Pellegrini, Bartini, & Brooks, 1999; Schwartz, 2000). Hanish et al., (2004) conclude that in early childhood bullies and victims are typically the same children and that these groups become increasingly distinct as children grow older.

During the developmental period between the ages of ten and thirteen there appears to be a further accentuation of gender differences in the manifestation of aggression (Cairns & Cairns, 2000). Females begin to engage more extensively in relational aggression, which is defined by Crick & Bigbee (1998) as harming others through malicious manipulation of their peer relationships or friendships. Other related terms that describe forms of aggression more commonly ascribed to girls are indirect aggression and social aggression. Indirect aggression involves covert behaviors such as social manipulation to target individuals (Kaukiainen et al., 1999) while social aggression subsumes indirect aggression and also may involve direct behaviors including verbal rejection and negative facial expressions or body movements (Galen and Underwood, 1997). Male aggressive behavior is primarily overt, including attacking others through physical harm or the threat of such harm. It has been argued that relational aggression requires high levels of social intelligence and that girls may begin using this approach

more frequently as a result of earlier maturation (Pepler & Sedighdeilami, 1998). Additionally, Crick and Grotpeter (1995) propose that children aggress in ways that are most likely to damage valued goals. Socialization differences may result in girls placing higher value on social interactions while boys are taught to be motivated by instrumental and dominance-oriented goals (Block, 1983). Social learning theory suggests that boys receive reinforcement from viewing others use overt aggression as well as by talking about and acting on instrumental, overt aggression themselves. Tapper (2004) posits that beliefs among children regarding "gender appropriate" expressions of aggression lead girls to reward girls who utilize expressive forms of aggression and punish those who aggress overtly.

Recent attention to relational types of aggression does not suggest that girls never use overt aggression. Investigation of antisocial behaviors and gender indicate that the rates of overt aggression by girls are increasing at significantly greater levels than those of boys (Obeidallah & Earls, 1999). In a study by Crick (1997), 1,166 children aged nine through 12 nominated their peers on behaviors of overt and relational aggression. Of the 161 children identified as overtly aggressive, 31 were girls. The overtly aggressive girls that made up 19% of that sample were found to be significantly more maladjusted than girls who used relational aggression. Thus, although fewer girls than boys employ physical forms of aggression, those girls who are overtly aggressive can be considered a high priority for treatment.

Due to the widely accepted gender differences that exist in the manifestation of aggression, the majority of overt aggression research has dealt primarily with boys

(Lochman, Burch, Curry, & Lampron, 1984; Kazdin, Esveldt-Dawson, French, & Unis, 1987). Olweus (1979) conducted a review of longitudinal studies on aggressive behavioral patterns in males. The author concluded that there is a high degree of consistency over time with aggression, approaching the across-time stability of variables within the intelligence domain. Specifically, Olweus posited that aggressive behavior at ages 12 and 13 demonstrates high to very high stability (from 50% to over 90% of variance accounted for) for one to five years, and high stability (approximately 45% of variance accounted for) for up to 10 years. In their longitudinal research with aggressive youth, Eron & Slaby (1994) found that the strongest predictor of an individual's likelihood of perpetrating violence as an adolescent is a history of engaging in aggressive behavior as a child. The risk of future violence is increased with individuals who are exposed to additional risk factors including association with deviant peers, harsh and inconsistent parental discipline, poor parental monitoring, and academic failure (Webster-Stratton & Taylor, 2001).

Although bullying and victimization are first identified by elementary school age, these problems become increasingly acute, both in terms of frequency and severity, in early adolescence (Kazdin, 1993). Thus, indications of aggression and antisocial behavior that are first evidenced in youth suggest risk for heightened manifestations of these behaviors later in life. Without appropriate early intervention, aggression in youth commonly escalates into later violence and other anti-social behavior (American Psychological Association, 1993). Coie et al., (1993) noted that:

> "…peer rejection, aggression, and poor parental monitoring at age 10 predict deviant peer involvement at age 12. Thus, an optimal prevention

> strategy is to target aggressive behavior, peer isolation, and parental monitoring when children are 10 years old… To postpone intervention until later might allow undesirable peer relations to become established and make the prevention task more difficult (pg. 1015).

Etiology

The current research on aggression converges in agreement that the behavior likely is the result of many levels of interaction between genetics, biological factors and an individual's life experiences and environmental influences (Bates, Bayles, Bennett, Ridge, & Brown, 1991). Individual differences in infant temperament have been linked to later conduct problems, as have certain in utero experiences (Dodge, 2000). Genetics are an important component, but it is important to note that while still in the womb a child is already being affected by his environment, and at the outset of life the parent-child relationship works to reinforce certain behaviors.

Social learning theory emphasizes the importance of modeling as an explanation for a wide variety of children's behaviors (Bandura, 1973). Bandura theorized that children acquire both adaptive and maladaptive behaviors simply by watching and listening to those around them. Specifically, it is the consequences (i.e., rewards or punishments) that accompany experienced or observed behaviors that either reduce or increase the likelihood of a behavior being adopted. Bandura's research demonstrated that children who viewed a model being rewarded for aggression were more likely to engage in that behavior themselves than children who observed the aggression go unrewarded (Bandura, 1983). Olweus (1993) posited that individual inhibitions are strengthened or weakened dependent upon the observed rewards experienced by aggressors. As aggression is rewarded, observer's inhibitions for aggression are often

reduced while negative consequences for the model are reasoned to activate and reinforce inhibitory tendencies in the observer.

A child's environment can act as a buffer towards developing aggressive problem behaviors, even when a predisposition exists, or can create additional risk. Social status variables such as poverty, racism, a society that approves of violence, deviant peer groups, and the resulting stressful impact on family members have all been linked to the development of conduct disorder (Guerra, Huesmann, Tolan, Van Acker, & Enron, 1995). An early childhood beset with difficult parental interactions and inadequate support may not provide a child with the social skills or regulatory mechanisms necessary to successfully navigate later life (Dodge, 2000). When a predisposition exists for aggression, and a child's environment does not serve as a protective influence, he is at a heightened risk for exhibiting aggressive behavior.

Ecological Theory

The ecological systems perspective developed by Bronfenbrenner (1979) posits that a child's development occurs within the context of the interrelated systems that form his environment. The child is conceptualized to be located in the center of the network of systems that constitute his ecology. Bronfenbrenner offered that the processes of individuals and properties of environments "must be viewed as interdependent and analyzed in system terms" (pg. 41). This social network includes four intertwined system levels: microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystem. Swearer and Espelage (2004) provide an updated social-ecological framework (see figure 1) which specifically conceptualizes bullying behavior from an ecological perspective.

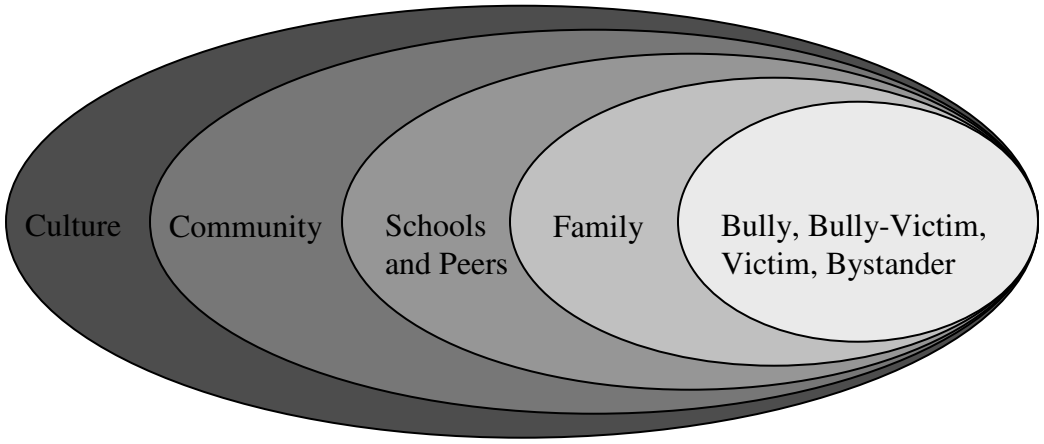

Figure 1. A social-ecological framework of bullying in youth (Swearer & Espelage, 2004)

Using the terminology introduced by Bronfenbrenner, Swearer and Espelage outline a diverse array of systems that can be considered a child's microsystem. Microsystems include settings such as the playground or variables such as his social status on the bully/victim continuum. Additionally, microsystems include processes including his immediate interactions with others, and how these interactions either exacerbate or mitigate bullying and/or victimization behaviors.

A child's mesosystem can be understood as an interrelationship among multiple microsystems in which he is involved. An example of a relevant mesosystem would be the degree of consistency between messages provided to a child by parents and teachers about the appropriateness of using physical aggression. A child who has been taught by

parents that it is acceptable to hurt other children will experience incongruence with a teacher's message that this is unacceptable behavior.

An exosystem is a system that a child is not actively involved in, but affects the child nonetheless. Examples of the exosystem include school policies regarding bullying as well as the level of parental involvement in the school system. Lack of adult supervision and unresponsiveness to the needs of victims and bullies are factors at the level of school that implicitly allow bullying to occur. A specific example of a potential exosystem shift is found in provisions for safer schools within the No Child Left Behind educational policy (Ed.gov, 2005*)*. This legislation stipulates that schools must develop violence prevention programs that have demonstrated effectiveness and be based on scientifically based research.

Lastly, the macrosystem is best understood as processes that occur at the cultural or societal level. In regards to bullying, this would include societal attitudes towards bullying (i.e. bullying as a "normal" aspect of development) and aggression.

The interrelatedness of these systems is evidenced with the No Child Left Behind example noted previously. While the effects of the provisions would result from the exosystem level, the priority prescribed to enact these policies (i.e. funding) is a macrosystem level process. This example illustrates that focusing on one systemic level is rarely sufficient for understanding complex processes. Rather than attempting to understand a child in isolation, it is necessary to consider his entire ecology and how varying systems function to encourage or inhibit both prosocial and antisocial behaviors.

In summary, within the ecological perspective no one condition drives a child to be aggressive and bully other children. Bullying, as well as other behaviors, results from a complex interaction of factors at multiple levels within the child's ecological context (Swearer & Doll, 2001). Complex layers of an individual's environment including biological factors, family, peers, community factors, and society interact to affect development. Theoretical and empirical support for ecological factors that contribute to aggression will be discussed further.

Individual Characteristics of Individuals who Bully. Children who bully are more frequently boys than girls and make-up between 7% and 15% of sampled school-age populations (Olweus, 1993; Schwartz, Dodd, & Coie, 1993). They are frequently larger in size, physically stronger, and more aggressive than their peers (Pellegrini, Bartini, & Brooks, 1999). An emerging body of research on social development has focused on the social information processing of those that aggress to determine which cognitive factors contribute to the behavior.

Crick and Dodge (1994) reformulated existing cognitive theories on the information processing of children to offer alternative explanations for aggressive behavior. This social information processing model posits that a network of cognitive processes interact to construct interpersonal interpretations and responses. Processing of stimuli begins with encoding and interpretation of social cues, and check against social goals that are in place. Potential responses are weighed in addition to the probable outcomes that are likely to occur. The chosen behavior is then enacted with the actual outcome evaluated and encoded. Crick and Dodge (1996) theorized that accurate

processing at each level will lead to competence within a social situation, whereas distorted or deficient processing will likely result in deviant social behavior.

Research suggests that there are at least two general social information processing patterns that are characteristic of aggressive children (Crick & Dodge, 1996). In studies requiring participants to interpret social stimuli, aggressive children display a pattern of assigning malicious intent to their peers in ambiguous situations (Dodge & Tomlin, 1987; Guerra & Slaby, 1989). This attribution bias brings about a reactive aggressive response, as the child perceives that peers are attempting to harm him (Crick & Dodge, 1996).

The other pattern found in aggressive children occurs in the decision making step of processing (Crick & Dodge, 1996). In a study by Crick and Ladd (1993), it was demonstrated that children rated by their teachers as aggressive expected positive outcomes to result from hypothetical aggressive actions. The researchers found that proactively aggressive individuals believe in the social effectiveness of aggression, whereas reactively aggressive children do not. This provides evidence supporting the existence of separate cognitive structures influencing distinct aggressive responses.

These two maladaptive cognitive processes interact to construct a belief that coercion or overt aggression is necessary to achieve one's desired goals. This may lead a child to focus more on hostile aspects of social cues, access aggressive responses more readily, and anticipate positive outcomes for aggression (Dodge, 1993). Hence, reactive and proactive aggression rarely occur in isolated, pure forms, as social cognitive deficits or distortions at various levels of processing affect the interpretation of information at multiple levels.

Lochman and Dodge (1994) examined the social-cognitive processes of 296 pre-adolescent and adolescent boys determined to be severely violent, moderately aggressive, and non-aggressive. The findings of this study were that attributional biases, problem-solving deficiencies, and positive outlooks towards the outcomes of aggression were present in both the severely violent and aggressive children, and the extent of these deficits and distortions was directly related to the severity of their aggression. It can be extrapolated from this study that those boys who had attributional biases would be more likely to be reactively aggressive and would benefit from treatment addressing that distorted processing. Those individuals exhibiting positive outlooks towards aggression would be more likely to utilize instrumental aggression in order to attain their goals. For these individuals, removing reward resulting from their aggressive behavior would be necessary for intervention. Because bullying is predominantly a form of instrumental aggression, the need to remove the reward stemming from their behavior should be a component of an effective bullying intervention program.

Individual Characteristics of Children who are bullied. While significant research has focused on the aggressors of peer bullying, much less has focused on the children who are targets of bullying (Crick & Grotpeter, 1996). Victims of bullying tend to be younger and physically weaker than those who bully them (Olweus, 1993). Voss and Mulligan (2000) found that older boys who were smaller in size than their peers reported victimization at twice the rates of average size or taller peers. Children who are victimized by others tend to be passive or submissive and are anxious and insecure compared to their peers (Olweus, 1978). They are unlikely to be assertive when bullied,

signaling to aggressors that they are desirable targets. Smaller physical size and an anxious, passive coping style can be considered additive factors that results in a greater likelihood of being targeted by those who bully. The ongoing bullying of these individuals exacerbates the anxiety and low self-esteem that they are already experiencing which results in an increased likelihood of victimization.

Family Characteristics of Individuals who Bully. Research has demonstrated that parents of children who are bullied or bully others are frequently unaware of the problem and do not talk with their children about their interactions at school (Olweus 1993). Olweus lists four factors that increase an individual's risk of bullying others and three of them are family factors: 1) a lack of parental warmth and involvement; 2) Parents who allow their children to be inappropriately aggressive towards siblings, other children, and adults; and 3) parents who use physical punishment or discipline during emotional outbursts.

An outgrowth of social learning theory is Patterson's description of the coercive family process. Parents of children with externalizing behavior disorders tend to be ineffectual in managing their children's behavior and often engage in practices that actually contribute to and sustain their children's maladaptive behavior (Patterson, 1982). Patterson found that this dysfunctional family system essentially trains children to be aggressive and noncompliant. Follow-up research in this area has indicated that coercive and punitive discipline, the use of frequent reprimands, and low levels of parental warmth are parenting behaviors that have been linked with increased rates of childhood

aggression and delinquency (Dishion, 1990; Petit, Bates, & Dodge, 1993). It has been stated that "bullies at school are often victims at home" (Batsche, 1997; pg. 172).

Patterson and Dishion (1988) found that the apparent link between lower socioeconomic status and higher prevalence of child antisocial behaviors is the result of parental behaviors. The authors provide evidence that it is the higher levels of stress experienced by parents with lower income that brings about diminished effective parenting practices. By extension, a child exhibiting frequent rule breaking behaviors will create additional parental stress and contribute to this cycle of dysfunctional interactions.

In a review of research with parents of children displaying a spectrum of antisocial behaviors, parent factors including stress, psychopathology, social isolation, and poor parental relations have been shown to affect the onset and developmental course of antisocial child behaviors (Pepler & Rubin, 1991). Conversely, numerous protective factors have been identified at the family level including social support, parental warmth, appropriate discipline, adult monitoring and supervision, and bonding with family models (Coie et al., 1993).

Peer Factors involved with Bullying. Experiences within the family system are critical in the formative development of both pro-social and antisocial behaviors and there is evidence that these behaviors generalize to interactions with peers at school (Dishion, 1990). This mechanism occurs as the child who has been "trained" at home to be coercive and engage in antisocial behaviors actively seeks out similar peers (Patterson, 1992). Another explanation for the development of the deviant peer group is that coercive behavior by individuals leads to social rejection by prosocial peers and

acceptance only by other rejected children. Aggression has been reported as the greatest behavioral determinant of peer rejection in childhood (Coie, J., Dodge, K., & Kupersmidt, 1990). Coie, Lochman, Terry, and Hyman (1992) conducted a longitudinal study to evaluate the effects of aggression and social rejection in third grade on overall adjustment in sixth grade. It was found that aggression and peer rejection in third grade each separately predicted teacher-rated poor adjustment as well as self and parent-rated disorder in sixth grade. Once socially rejected children find one another the resulting group acts to reinforce each member's antisocial behavior, resulting in the increased severity and frequency of negative behaviors by all. This influence cannot be underestimated as peers become increasingly influential throughout the school-age years.

Pikas (2002) investigated the processes that occur with children who engage together in group bullying. In individual therapeutic talks centering on these group dynamics several common experiences emerged. These individuals revealed that they: 1) felt group pressures to contribute to bullying; 2) felt fear that the group would turn on them if they didn't cooperate; and 3) experienced feelings of guilt that they were participating in ganging up on a single victim. Pikas described the group bullying dynamic as one that kept each of the individual children "ensnared" (p. 309), and posited that a connection with others outside of the group may create a loosening of the negative bonds.

Social information processing theory acknowledges the influence of the peer group in the cognitive processes that lead individuals to be aggressive or non-aggressive. The steps of cognitive processing are theorized to be fluid and non-linear, with continual

transactions occurring between biological dispositions, environmental cues, and feedback from peers (Hinshaw & Lee, 2003). Thus, the input of the peer group, either encouraging or discouraging aggressive behavior, can have a significant role in predicting behavior.

It is not only the influence of deviant peers that influences bullying and other antisocial behaviors. A developing line of research has focused on the behaviors of students that may not be directly involved in bullying incidents. In an analysis of bullying incidents, Pepler, Smith, and Rigby (2004) found that onlookers are almost always present when bullying occurs. Olweus (1993) outlined multiple group mechanisms existing in the classroom ecology that support bullying behavior. The first is what Olweus defined as "social contagion" in which students lacking social status are drawn to supporting aggressors in an attempt to improve their standing in the classroom. In addition, individual observers minimize their own feelings of guilt by believing that others should be the ones to intervene. This phenomenon has been addressed in the social psychology literature which has detailed the decreased sense of individual responsibility that occurs in group situations. The effect of the group process is that non-aggressive children who are present for bullying incidents do not intervene. This lack of response lends tacit support for the behavior. Another group factor is the collective's diminished perception of the victim over time that occurs following repeated incidents of being physically and verbally aggressed (O'Connell, Pepler, & Craig, 1999). Rather than feeling sympathy or a responsibility to intervene, observers characterize victims as deserving of the abuse they receive. Similar to the outcome of deferring responsibility to

others to intervene, the diminished perception of the victim serves to reduce personal guilt following his victimization.

Several decades of research on bullying in other countries has reframed the discussion of bullying from the traditional focus on aggressors and victims to viewing bullying as occurring as a group process and social in nature (Pikas, 1975, Lagerspetz, Bjorkqvist, Berts, & King, E., 1982; Salmivalli et al., 1996; Sutton & Smith, 1999). Specifically, Pikas described bullying as violence in a group context, in which pupils interact to reinforce each other's behaviors.

Although theoretical rationale exists for bullying occurring as a group process, little empirical investigation has occurred. One important study in this area was completed by Salmivalli et al., (1996) with sixth grade, Finnish classrooms. The researchers investigated the participant roles of bullying incidents using a peer-rating and peer nomination questionnaire with sixth grade students from 23 classes. Participants in the study were required to: 1) assess the likelihood of each of the members of their class (including themselves) of engaging in bully related behaviors; 2) identify the victims who were bullied by others; and 3) nominate the three male classmates and female classmates who they liked the least, as well as the most.

The bullying scale used by the researchers consisted of 50 bullying situational behaviors that assessed each student's tendency to take the role of bully, reinforcer of the bully, assistant of the bully, defender of the victim, and outsider. Each student rated every other student on each behavior using a three point scale of *never*, *sometimes*, and *often*. The scores for each child were standardized by class and students were identified as

having a dominant participant role for their highest subscale score above the class mean. If a student had a second score that was above the mean and it was close (.1) to their highest score, they were characterized as not having a clearly definable participant role. On the victim nomination portion of the questionnaire, children were characterized as victims (regardless of their participant role) if 30% or more of their classmates nominated them. The third section of the questionnaire served to replicate previous research and added the variable of social acceptance versus social rejection. Using these data, students were divided into the status groups of popular, rejected, neglected, controversial, and average.

The data collected by Salmivalli et al., yielded numerous important findings in the investigation of bullying as a group phenomenon. Using the results of their questionnaire, 87% of students were able to be assigned a participant role: victim (11.7%), bully (8.2%), reinforcer (19.5%), assistant (6.8%), defender (17.3%), and outsider (23.7%). Statistically significant gender differences were found for defender (30.1% of the girls, 4.5% of the boys), outsider (40.2% girls, 7.3% boys), reinforcer (37.3% boys, 1.7% girls), assistant (12.2% boys, 1.4% girls), and bully (10.5% boys, 5.9% girls). Interestingly, there was very little difference in the frequency of victims between the genders (11.8% boys, 11.5% girls). Differences were found between self and peer-ratings with individuals more likely to underestimate their tendency to act as a bully and overestimate their likelihood of acting as a reinforcer, defender, and outsider. There was a 67% agreement between self and peer-rating for status as a victim, however many children characterized as victims by their peers did not complete this portion of the questionnaire, perhaps due to shame or

sadness. Evaluating participant role and status group data together indicated that the most popular children were likely to be defenders (43%) while the most rejected children were victims (71.4% rejected) and bullies (51.3% rejected).

The findings of the study conducted by Salmivalli et al., provides strong empirical evidence that bullying exists as a group process and that children not meeting the traditional definitions of "bully" or "victim" are exhibiting behaviors that contribute to the likelihood of bullying in their environment. This study also highlights the connection between social status and involvement with bullying, as both victims and bullies scored lowest in popularity and highest in rejection. While it cannot be concluded from this study whether lack of social status causes involvement in bullying or involvement causes lost social status, what is clear is that both bullies and victims are experiencing social rejection. An additional important finding from this study is the link demonstrated between high social status and the role classification of "defender". This finding provides support for classroom level bullying interventions as it may be possible that high status children can function as effective models of prosocial behavior for their classmates. It should be noted that an investigation of the social context of bullying using the participant role measure developed by Salmivalli et al., has not yet been published in the United States and it cannot yet be determined if a similar breakdown amongst the participant roles is occurring in American schools.

School Climate. With the understanding that bullying occurs as a social process, it has been argued that the ecology of the classroom is one of the most important and proximal contexts for the development and prevention of bullying (Hanish, et al., 2004).

The influence of school policies, teacher and school personnel attitudes, and classroom norms regarding bullying have all been found to contribute to the level of encouragement conveyed towards the behavior.

Hoover and Halzer (1994) posit that the implicit messages conveyed by school personnel through tolerating, dismissing, or ignoring of bullying behaviors not only allows the behavior to continue, but increases internalizing symptoms of victims including powerlessness and diminished self-worth. Conversely, when teachers actively intervene in bullying incidents and communicate a no-tolerance attitude, a school culture is developed that is unsupportive to bullying. Olweus (1993) noted that bullying rates decrease in schools once school personnel are provided with effective strategies to address bullying and implement these strategies immediately upon witnessing aggression in their schools.

In a survey of elementary students, approximately 40% of students who were bullied at school responded that teachers and school personnel attempted to "put a stop to it" only *once in a while* or *almost never* (Olweus, 1993). Similar results were found for children who admitted to bullying, indicating that a significant percentage of both victims and bullies believed that teachers did relatively little to stop bullying at school. It has been suggested that perhaps teachers ignore bullying out of the belief that it is a normal part of growing up and that students should learn to take care of conflict themselves (Pellegrini, Bartini, & Brooks, 1999). In discussion with teachers and administrators, Olweus (1993) also found a tendency for school personnel to underestimate the frequency of bullying or deny its existence at their schools entirely. Taking into account the well

established literature on the universal existence of bullying in schools, it can be argued that denial of the problem is as problematic as accepting its existence without action.

Pellegrini, Bartini, and Brooks (1999) found that bullies use of proactive aggression is related to classroom norms when social status is increased for aggressors and diminished for victims. It can be reasoned that bullies will continue to be aggressive as long as perceived benefits outweigh potential costs. Henry et al., (2000) conducted research exploring the relationship between classroom attitudes and norms related to aggression and their relationship with individual aggressive behavior. The researchers expected that descriptive classroom norms (the central tendency of classmates' aggressive behavior) and injunctive normative beliefs (classmates' beliefs about the acceptability of aggressive behavior) would predict later individual aggression and beliefs. The sample consisted of first graders, second graders, and fourth graders with measures collected in 1991 and again in 1993. A peer nomination scale was used to nominate aggressive classmates (e.g. "Who pushes and shoves other children?") and the Normative Beliefs Approving of Aggression Scale (NOBAGS; Huesmann & Guerra, 1997) served as a self-report measure to provide both personal beliefs about aggression as well as classroom injunctive norms. Teacher rated aggressive behavior provided data to be used to determine classroom level descriptive norms.

Results from analyses of these data showed mixed support for the researchers' hypotheses. Descriptive classroom norms had no direct or indirect effect on aggressive behavior for any of the age groups. Injunctive norms, however, predicted change in aggression directly, through personal normative beliefs for all age groups and for

aggressive behavior for sixth graders. Thus, classrooms in which teachers and classmates discouraged aggression predicted diminished favorable attitudes towards aggression and aggressive behavior two years later. This study has important implications for school-based intervention, as these findings suggest that aggression may be best targeted by addressing classroom level norms related to the acceptability of aggression. Henry et al., called for investigation in classrooms to determine if this is indeed the case.

Previous Overt Aggression and Bullying Interventions

Although it has been noted by many researchers that more research is needed on aggression in children (APA, 1993; Nelson & Finch, 2000), there are areas of developing research that provide promise for intervening with youth. Kazdin (1993) has developed criteria for justifying the implementation of interventions intending to treat aggressive behaviors. The author proposes that treatments must have theoretical rationale, empirical support, and outcome evidence that demonstrates change on clinically relevant measures.

Interventions targeting Aggressors

Interventions have traditionally focused on aggressors evidencing clinical symptoms and significant problem behaviors. A meta-analysis conducted by Beck & Fernandez (1998) determined that employing cognitive-behavioral therapy to alleviate individual problems with anger and aggression is justifiable based on the research literature. Brestan and Eyberg (1998) conducted a thorough review of the literature in order to identify empirically supported treatments for children with conduct problems. For the developmental period of pre-adolescence, the researchers found that only two studies utilized rigorous methodologies and demonstrated treatment efficacy.

The two identified studies were the Problem Solving Skills Training (PSST) Coupled with the Parent Management Training (PMT) program implemented by Kazdin, Siegel, & Bass (1992), and the Anger Coping Program (ACP) program by Lochman, Burch, Curry, & Lampron (1984). Both interventions utilize child-centered therapies derived from cognitive-behavioral theory and, although not addressed in the review for the ACP, also incorporate parent-training components. The resulting multi-component interventions have demonstrated greater treatment effects and maintenance of effects than the original analyses that only focused on the child (Kazdin, Siegel, & Bass, 1992; Lochman & Wells, 2002). These findings are consistent with theories of social information processing, coercive family processes and ecological systems. The child therapy component of these interventions focuses on increasing child insight into the cognitive deficiencies and distortions that contribute to aggressive behavioral responses. The parent intervention programs utilize social learning tenets such as operant conditioning to teach parents skills for reinforcing positive behaviors and minimizing negative behaviors. Kazdin et al., (1992) conducted a study with three treatment groups: 1) child-centered therapy (PSST); 2) parent training only (PMT); and 3) child-centered therapy and parent training combined (PSST/PMT). All groups displayed increased child prosocial competence and reduced child aggressive, antisocial, and delinquent behaviors. The greatest change, however, was shown for the multi-component group, providing evidence that intervening at multiple ecological levels is most effective at bringing about change.

School Interventions

Schools are the most logical site for violence prevention programs, as a large proportion of youth can be reached through schools, and violence is a problem that affects schools directly (Callahan & Rivara, 1992). Olweus (1993) concluded that "the school is without doubt where most… bullying occurs" (pg. 21). Additionally, developing evidence of the important influence of the classroom ecology on the likelihood of bullying suggests that school based intervention is not only convenient, but also appropriate. Coie et al., (1993) provide additional support for whole group intervention occurring in schools as universal interventions will not only reach those children identified as at risk, but also the "false negatives", or children incorrectly identified as not needing intervention. Similarly Offord (1997) argued that preventive intervention in public schools is appropriate given the difficulty in predicting with certainty which children will become delinquent and violent as adolescents. Reaching youth that are in school and not yet exhibiting clinical levels of acting out behavior can prevent violence and has numerous secondary benefits including the sense of improved school safety and educational environment for all students.

Wilson, Lipsey, and Derzon (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of school-based interventions targeting aggressive behavior. The authors included studies with at least one aggression related outcome variable including bullying, aggressive behavior, fighting, and conduct disorder. An overall effect size of .25 was found, translating into approximately a seven percent decrease on aggression outcome measures. While this review doesn't specify the participant groups of intervention programs (i.e. individuals exhibiting problem behavior versus intact classes), important effect sizes were reported

which inform future research. The meta-analysis indicated that counseling or behavioral programs showed the greatest treatment effects followed closely by social competence training, and peer mediation programs having the smallest effect sizes. A related finding was that the greatest effect sizes were found for programs targeting selected, or more aggressive, populations. When subject characteristics, such as level of aggression, were controlled for, the variations between intervention strategies decreased resulting in much more variability within than between intervention types. The authors note that only small effects were found for participant groups whose baseline aggressive behavior was not high enough to allow for significant reduction. This finding indicates the challenge of demonstrating significant effects with preventive interventions as change is theorized to occur in the future and may not show up on outcome measures.

Several preventive interventions targeting bullying or other behaviors along the overt aggression spectrum have occurred in the school setting and provide encouraging findings. One such program, Second Step, is a school-based social skills curriculum designed to reduce aggressive behavior and increase social competency skills in preschool and elementary school aged children. Classrooms receiving the Second Step program received 20 to 30 lessons across a 16 to 20 week period. Pre, post, and follow-up parent and teacher ratings were collected for treatment schools and matched schools which served as controls. At post-test, participants showed significantly fewer aggressive behaviors at school (Grossman et al., 1997). At six month follow-up, however, differences between treatment and control groups disappeared.

The dissipation of short-term changes in behavior present in the evaluation of the Second Step program reflects several limitations in the intervention. The first is that the program operated from the traditional orientation of targeting aggressive behaviors only, rather than integrating developing research on the significant influence of systemic factors including the role of bystanders and teachers. Although this program existed in the classroom, its focus was not on the classroom microsystem, but instead on individual level behaviors. Secondly, this program consisted of only one component, that of a classroom social skills intervention. It is likely that treatment effects would be strengthened by not only addressing the role of bystanders and classroom norms but also integrating an additional parent or teacher focused program. This adaptation would be theoretically supported by ecological systems theory as it could alter additional system factors empirically demonstrated to contribute to aggression. Likely due to lack of differences at follow-up, a parent targeted program has since been added to the Second Step program to build upon the classroom component. The resulting multi-component program has yet to be evaluated.

Consistent with ecological theories on the development and maintenance of overt aggressive behaviors, several programs have intervened in multiple levels of children's ecologies in order to increase treatment effects. Three programs will be discussed in further detail as each offers guidance for the implementation of future preventive interventions in schools.

Project LIFT. Eddy, Reid, and Fetrow (2000) outline the implementation and findings from Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers (LIFT), an elementary

school-based program with whole class and parent education components. Program participants were first and fifth graders in predominantly White (88%) elementary schools in moderately sized urban city in the Pacific Northwest. The classroom component of the program consisted of one hour, twice a week sessions for 10 weeks dealing with social and problem solving skills. Within each session children were given semi-structured time on the playground in which they were observed and subsequently rewarded for prosocial behavior and inhibiting negative interactions with their peers. The parent component occurred during the same time period as the classroom program and consisted of weekly sessions developed theoretically from Patterson's coercion theory. Parent sessions focused on increasing positive interactions between parents and their children and reducing negative reinforcement patterns.

In the spring following the program, children who had participated in LIFT were less aggressive on the playground and had more positive teacher ratings than children in the control group. At that time, children in the control group showed no change in their overt aggression while program participants "drastically decreased their aggressive behaviors" (pg. 172). In addition, parents who had participated in the parent program exhibited less aversive behavior with their children in family problem solving sessions. In the three years following the program, differences were maintained between program participants and members of the control group. First grade participants were significantly less likely to exhibit an increase in severity of important markers of antisocial behavior. Children who participated in LIFT during the fifth grade evidenced delayed involvement

with deviant peers and other delinquent activities including drug and alcohol use and first arrest.

The techniques used for the classroom component of LIFT are very similar to those implemented by Second Step, discussed previously as a separate school-based program designed to reduce aggressive behavior. Results of Second Step (Grossman et al., 1997) were similar to those of LIFT at post-test with significant reduction of physically aggressive behaviors in the treatment group compared to control. At six month follow-up, however, participants in the LIFT program demonstrated continued differences in the levels of physical aggression compared to participants in the control condition. These results indicate that the presence of the parent training component in LIFT was critical in substantively altering participants' likelihood of aggressing in the future. The differences evident between the results of LIFT and Second Step at follow-up lend support to ecological theories of aggression as well as the need for multi-component programs that address multiple systems that influence children's behavior.

The Bullying Prevention Program. The Bullying Prevention Program developed by Olweus was the only bullying intervention that met the empirical criteria to be endorsed by the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado at Boulder (Swearer & Doll, 2001). The Bullying Prevention Program was first developed as the result of a national campaign in Norway in the early 1980s after three school-age boys committed suicide following severe bullying by their peers (Olweus, 1993). The program's goals are to reduce existing bully/victim problems in the school, prevent new problems from developing, and improve peer relations in the school. Specifically, the

foundation of the Bullying Prevention Program is that schools should be: 1) characterized by warmth, positive interest, and involvement by adults, 2) clear and firm in their limits to unacceptable behavior, and 3) consistent in applying non-hostile, non-corporal sanctions when rules are violated or behavior is unacceptable (Limber, 2004).

The Bullying Prevention Program is a universal program that targets the whole school for intervention. The program consists of several components and is both individual and system oriented in its approach. At the individual level, staff members meet with both perpetrators and victims of bullying. Victims are provided support and assistance in developing safety plans while bullies are given appropriate consequences. In addition, school personnel meet with parents of both victims and bullies to involve them in the process. Classroom level intervention occurs on a weekly basis with discussions centered around bullying and overall peer relations. Significant attention is directed towards school-wide implementation of policies to address bullying. Efforts include developing anti-bullying school rules, engaging parents on bullying prevention, requiring additional training for school staff, and providing additional supervision in areas of the school in which bullying is likely to occur (Limber, 2004).

Olweus' program was first evaluated in Norway with 2,500 5th-8th grade students. Significant reductions were demonstrated in self-reported bullying and victimization, and for teacher rated bullying behavior in the classroom. Significant increases were found for students' perceptions of positive school environment (Olweus, 1993). The first evaluation of the Bullying Prevention Program in America occurred in the mid 1990's in South Carolina with 6,388 4th-6th graders. Eighteen schools participated in the program and

after one year significant decreases were found in both boys' and girls' reports of bullying others and decreases in boys' reports of being bullied and of social isolation. Analyses of dosage effects found that larger reductions in school bullying were found with increased implementation of treatment components.

The Bullying Prevention Program is likely one of the most intensive bullying interventions due to its emphasis on intervening at multiple ecological system levels. Few programs have targeted for change the exosystem ecological level of school policy. Despite its established record of bullying reduction in schools, the cost and prioritization required to implement the program in its entirety places it at risk to be deemed impractical by school administrators in the United States.

Toronto Anti-Bullying Intervention. The need for a bullying intervention program in Toronto was spurred by a survey in Toronto schools in the early 1990's that found that, within the last school term, 15% of students acknowledged bullying other students and 20% of children reported being victimized by bullying (Pepler, Craig, Ziegler, & Charach, 1994). The Toronto Anti-Bullying Intervention program was modeled after Olweus' multi-systemic Bullying Prevention Program albeit without significant funding. The Bullying Prevention Program was implemented following a national mandate with the support of the Norwegian Ministry of Education, while the Toronto Anti-Bullying Intervention was piloted on a much smaller scale by local teachers and administrators rather than researchers. Although program facilitators had limited knowledge of existing bullying literature, school staff drew from practical experience to implement a program tailored to the specific bullying problems that existed at their schools. Two team leaders

from four pilot schools met the summer preceding the intervention to learn about the Bullying Prevention Program and plan implementation at their respective schools.

Intervention programs differed somewhat by school, however three components were present in each school: staff training, codes of behavior, and improved playground supervision. Similar to the original program, the intervention targeted the four levels of: 1) whole school, 2) parents, 3) classrooms, and 4) individual bullies and victims. At the level of school several actions were taken. Seminars were conducted to educate staff on bullying and victimization and outline new policies to increase playground supervision and codify unacceptable school behaviors and the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community. At the classroom level, sessions were designed to establish a no-tolerance policy for bullying behavior, increase responsibilities of onlookers to intervene, and heighten awareness about the need to include isolated children into activities.

The results of the program were evaluated at an 18-month follow-up. While bullying was characterized as still a problem at each of the intervention schools, positive effects were evident at each level of the intervention. Some of the greatest treatment effects occurred with teachers. Students reported that teachers were significantly more likely to intervene in bullying incidents as well as address bullying incidents with the aggressors. Mixed evidence was demonstrated at the level of classroom. Although peers showed a 17% decrease in their likelihood of joining a bullying episode, there was no change in their likelihood to intervene to stop an incident of bullying. While prosocial bystander behaviors did not increase, reinforcing bystander behaviors were reduced.

Perhaps due to a combination of teacher behavioral change and diminished bystander negative behaviors, a decreased proportion of children reported being victimized within the previous five days at follow-up.

The results of the Toronto Anti-Bullying Intervention offer a valuable contribution to the bullying intervention literature as they illustrate that meaningful change in school ecology can occur without significant costs. Several limitations exist however, that limit the conclusions that can be drawn from this program. Each of the schools implemented individualized versions of the program dependent upon perceived needs. It is unclear if effects differed across schools as well as the degree to which each of the program components was implemented and responsible for changed behaviors in teachers and students. Further investigation is needed in order to specifically evaluate intervention effects at the school level with attention to treatment implementation, specifically including the use of a treatment manual and measures of treatment fidelity.

Statement of the Problem

Bullying is the most prevalent form of low-level violence among children and has serious long term consequences for bullies, victims, and school communities (Whitted & Dupper, 2005). The 1993 American Psychological Association (APA) *Commission on Violence and Youth* states, "Violence among youth is not random, uncontrollable, or inevitable. Many factors, both individual and social, contribute to an individual's propensity to use violence, and many of these factors are within our power to change" (p. 5). Without appropriate early intervention, aggression in youth commonly escalates into later violence and other anti-social behavior.

This study will investigate the effects of a school-based preventive intervention developed to intervene in overt bullying in addition to preventing escalated aggressive behaviors. Previous research has demonstrated that the majority of childhood bullying occurs at school and rarely do teachers or other students intervene to stop it (Pepler et al., 1994). The behavior of children who assume the roles of bullies, victims, and bystanders develops within a school ecology in which teachers and bystanders are unaware or unsure of how to intervene. Bronfenbrenner (1979) addresses the phenomenon of ecological transition in which an individual's position within his ecology is altered as the result of a shift in role or setting. Developing research on the existence of well defined participant roles, classroom norms, and teacher attitudes and behaviors related to bullying invites questions regarding the potential for altering these variables to bring about ecological transition within classrooms.

Bullying has been defined as the repeated victimization of an individual through exposure to negative actions on the part of one or more other individuals, and is a form of proactive overt aggression (Olweus, 1991). Recent research on childhood bullying has yielded important findings that inform understanding on the development and maintenance of the behavior. Specifically, research on the developmental course of aggression (Coie et al., 1993), the critical role of the bystander in bullying incidents (Salmivalli et al., 1996), and the influence of the collective belief about the acceptability of aggressive behavior (Henry, Guerra, & Huesmann, 2000), offer theoretical rationale for overt aggression and bullying interventions. As a result, the current focus in bullying intervention programs has shifted from the traditional attention to bullies or victims of

aggression in isolation, and instead focused on systemically targeting the ecology in which the behavior occurs.

Several encouraging school based, multi-component programs have utilized ecological tenets to bring about reduced bullying and aggression (Olweus, 1993; Pepler et al., 1994; Eddy et al., 2000). Although these programs have demonstrated encouraging treatment effects, significant challenges are present within each that limits their ability to be implemented in schools. Specifically, the Bullying Prevention Program and Project LIFT require significant cost and class time, while the Toronto Anti-Bullying Intervention was implemented with focus on service delivery rather than methodological rigor. Thus, the challenge in developing school-based anti-bullying interventions is three-fold: 1) to draw upon theory to bring about meaningful reductions in pro-bullying attitudes and overtly aggressive behavior; 2) to be cost-effective and acknowledge current practical issues including limited class time and resources; and 3) to utilize a treatment manual and attend to treatment fidelity in order to enable replication.

The present study will extend previous research in several ways. First, this study will determine if a six session classroom intervention coupled with a teacher education program is sufficient to alter the attitudes and behaviors related to overt aggression of fourth grade students. Next, this study will measure treatment effects using instruments developed to measure overtly aggressive and prosocial behaviors as well as attitudes towards aggression. Although these instruments have demonstrated empirical support, they have not yet been utilized in published studies to measure change from pre to post in a school-based intervention. Finally, this study will facilitate replication through the

implementation of a manualized treatment program and utilize rigorous methods through an innovative approach for ensuring treatment fidelity.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Question 1: Following intervention, will participants have less favorable attitudes towards the use of overt aggression?

Hypothesis 1. There will be a statistically significant main effect across time for mean score differences of the average self-reported *general beliefs* subscale of the NOBAGS.

It is expected that participants in the intervention will demonstrate a decline in favorable attitudes towards aggression from pre-treatment to post-treatment. There are several explanations for this expected change. Henry et al., (2000) posit that the behavioral choices made by children are mediated by beliefs about the morality of aggressive behavior and that these beliefs are largely influenced by classroom climate. This intervention program intends to improve classroom climate by providing education to participants on the consequences of overt aggression for victims as well as skills for intervening in bullying. The program's focus on changing the attitudes and behaviors of bystanders to bullying will reduce the expectations of aggressors that their behavior will be rewarded by peers. Thus, those children who use aggression as a means of achieving their goals are expected to have a reduced belief in the utility of their aggressive behavior.

Hypothesis 2. There will be a statistically significant main effect for gender, with mean differences demonstrated for boys and girls on the *general beliefs* subscale of the NOBAGS.

Significant differences between boys and girls on attitudes towards aggression have been demonstrated previously in research on the NOBAGS, with boys evidencing more favorable attitudes (Huesmann & Guerra, 1997). It is expected that this difference will be present in this study. It is not expected that there will be a gender by time interaction effect, as boys and girls are hypothesized to demonstrate similar reductions on the NOBAGS.

Hypothesis 3. There will not be statistically significant mean score differences among classrooms on the *general beliefs* subscale of the NOBAGS.

It is not expected that there will be significant differences between the classrooms participating in this study on attitudes towards aggression. The four classrooms will come from the same school which is expected to contribute to relatively consistent attitudes towards aggression. No classroom by time interaction effects is hypothesized to occur, as the teacher intervention program will enable teachers to work together in creating a standardized approach to responding to attitudes and behaviors in their classrooms that may be supportive of aggression.

Question 2: Following intervention, will participants score higher on peer-rated prosocial behavior than they did prior to intervention?

Hypothesis 4. There will be a statistically significant main effect across time for mean score differences on the individual average *prosocial behavior* subscale of the RSEQ-peer report.

It is expected that participants in this intervention will exhibit more helping behaviors at post-treatment than they did at pre-treatment. This change is hypothesized to occur as a result of the emphasis of the bullying intervention on: 1) educating bystanders on their role in challenging bullying; 2) modeling prosocial behaviors; and 3) allowing participants to practice behaviors that assist children who are being victimized. It is expected that the actions that bystanders take to intervene on the behalf of victims will be prosocial. Previous observations of bullying incidents that occur on both the playground and in the classroom suggest that when children intervene on the behalf of victims it is most frequently through the use of prosocial behaviors (Craig & Pepler, 1995; Atlas & Pepler, 1998).

Hypothesis 5. There will be a statistically significant main effect for gender, with boys and girls demonstrating mean differences on the *prosocial behavior* subscale score of the RSEQ-peer report.

Gender differences in prosocial behavior have been demonstrated consistently in elementary aged children. Using a peer nomination instrument, Crick and Grotpeter (1995) found girls to be significantly more likely than boys to be characterized as using prosocial behavior. Similarly, research on participant roles in bullying have also found significant differences with girls much more likely than boys to intervene on the behalf of victims (Salmivalli et al., 1996). It is expected that gender differences in prosocial

behavior will be present in this study at pre-intervention time 1, with girls being rated higher than boys. No gender by time interaction effect is predicted, as boys and girls are hypothesized to increase prosocial behavior at similar levels.

Hypothesis 6. There will not be a statistically significant effect for mean differences among classrooms on the *prosocial behavior* subscale score of the RSEQ-peer report.

It is expected that, similar to attitudes towards aggression, no significant differences in classroom prosocial behavior will be present at pre-intervention time 1. No classroom by time interaction effect is predicted to be present, as the intervention is hypothesized to improve prosocial behavior across classrooms at a consistent rate.

Question 3: Following intervention, will participants exhibit less overt aggression than they did prior to intervention?

Hypothesis 7. There will be a statistically significant main effect across time for mean score differences on the individual average *overt aggression* subscale of the RSEQ-peer report.

Previous aggression interventions have demonstrated modest to moderate success in reducing aggressive behavior (Wilson et al., 2003). It is expected that reduced aggressive behavior will be present in this study as a result of changes in attitudes towards aggression. Additionally, because this intervention targets bystanders rather than aggressors, some delay in the observation of reduced aggressive behavior is expected while the group process changes. Over time it is expected that the fourth grade ecology will provide discouragement rather than reward for aggression, resulting in the behavior

being inhibited. This finding would be consistent with the research by Henry et al., (2000) which demonstrated that aggressive children were less aggressive after spending time in a classroom that had unfavorable normative attitudes towards the use of aggression. Lastly, the implementation of ongoing accountability systems (i.e. the bully box and classroom code of conduct) is expected to cause further reductions in aggression.

Hypothesis 8. There will be a statistically significant main effect for gender, with boys and girls demonstrating mean differences on the *overt aggression* subscale score of the RSEQ-peer report.

Previous research has demonstrated that, as a group, boys show higher levels of overt aggression than girls (Grotpeter & Crick, 1996). It is expected that these differences will be present in this study. Additionally, no gender by time interaction is predicted to occur, as it is hypothesized that boys and girls will demonstrate similar reductions in overt aggression.

Hypothesis 9. There will not be a statistically significant effect for mean differences among classrooms on the *overt aggression* subscale score of the RSEQ-peer report.

It is expected that no significant differences in classroom overtly aggressive behavior will be present at pre-intervention time 1. No classroom by time interaction effect is predicted as the intervention is hypothesized to reduce aggression across classrooms at a consistent rate.

CHAPTER 3: METHOD

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of a school- based intervention designed to reduce bullying and other overtly aggressive behavior in fourth grade children. This study occurred concurrently with a related study that investigated the treatment outcomes of this intervention on social aggression. Procedures and participants for the two studies were identical however, the research questions and measures for each study differed.

Three elementary schools participated in this study; one to pilot the measures, one to pilot the intervention and one to act as the treatment school. In the treatment school, 71 participants in fourth grade classes served as the population for this study. The intervention consisted of a six session program targeting the classroom ecology, specifically through changing student attitudes towards aggression and increasing the responsibility of bystanders to intervene in bullying incidents. Additionally, ongoing teacher consultation and a three session teacher program served to further address the classroom ecology by providing teachers with skills to reduce classroom bullying. Pre- and post-treatment measures of attitudes towards aggression, prosocial behavior, and aggressive behavior were administered to assess treatment effects.

Approval by Human Subjects Committee

This study was conducted in compliance with all ethical standards for research published by the American Psychological Association in addition to best practices set forth by the University of Texas. Approval for the study was secured from the

Departmental Review Committee in the Department of Educational Psychology and the Institutional Review Board of the University of Texas.

Pilot Phase

Participants

The participants for the pilot phase of this study were drawn from two Central Texas elementary schools. The first school is located within Eanes Independent School District (EISD) and served as the pilot for the study's measures. EISD includes the municipalities of Rollingwood and Westlake Hills within the city of Austin (Eanesisd.tx.schoolwebpages.com, 2005). The community within EISD ranges between middle class and upper class. Approximately 7,000 students attend school within EISD at the six elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. The district's website provides the ethnic breakdown of its students as follows: 88% Caucasian, 6.3 Asian/Pacific Islander, 5.1% Hispanic, .4% African American, and .2% Native American. This school has achieved recognition as a National Blue Ribbon School and exemplary status from the Texas Education Agency (TEA). There are four fourth-grade classrooms with a total of 89 students in the fourth grade. A total of 25 students (11 boy and 14 girls) were given parental consent to participate in the piloting of measures.

The second school acted as the pilot intervention school. This school is a charter school in the Austin Independent School District and includes two upper grade classes (second, third, and fourth grades combined) that participated in the pilot intervention. In comparison to the other two schools in this study, the pilot intervention school is nontraditional including an experiential learning focus, two teachers per classroom, and a

combination of different aged students in each classroom. The student population for this school is comprised of children living throughout Austin and is more ethically diverse and varied in socio-economic status than the population of EISD. There was a 100% consent rate of participation in this school, with 62 students (32 boys and 30 girls) taking part in the pilot intervention.

Pilot School Measures

The Revised Social Experiences Questionnaire-Peer Report

Crick and Grotpeter (1995) developed the Children's Social Behavior Scale (CSBS; see Appendix B) as a peer nomination instrument for measuring social adjustment. The 19-item measure includes peer rejection and social status sociometrics in addition to four subscales including *overt aggression* and *prosocial behavior*. Third through sixth grade children (n=491) were given class rosters and encouraged to nominate up to three children for each of the items. Results of the study found Chronbach's Alpha coefficients of .94 for the *overt aggression* subscale and .90 for the *prosocial behavior* subscale. In addition, factor analysis found that the predicted factors were distinct. Other studies (e.g. Grotpeter & Crick, 1996; Crick & Bigbee, 1998) have demonstrated a reliable factor structure and internally consistent subscales with independent samples.

Crick and Grotpeter (1996) developed the Social Experience Questionnaire (SEQ) as a self-report measure that assesses how frequently children experience negative behaviors, such as aggression, as well as prosocial behaviors. The SEQ is a 15 item instrument that consists of three subscales: *overt victimization*, *relational victimization*,

and *prosocial behavior.* Respondents indicate the frequency with which behaviors happen to them on a scale of 1 (*never*) to 5 (*all the time*). In a study with 245 elementary school-aged children, Crick (1996) found Chronbach's Alpha coefficients of .94 for the *overt aggression* subscale and .93 for the *prosocial behavior* subscale.

Paquette and Underwood (1999) created the Revised Social Experiences Questionnaire (RSEQ; see Appendix C) by adapting the SEQ in order to assess the construct of social aggression rather than relational aggression. Items of the SEQ related to overt victimization and prosocial behavior were unchanged in the RSEQ, however two items were added in order to change the *relational victimization* subscale of the SEQ into a *social victimization* subscale.

For this study, a peer-ratings measure was developed that combines features of the CSBS (Crick and Grotpeter, 1995) and the RSEQ (Paquette & Underwood, 1999). Items of the RSEQ-peer report (see appendix D), used item stems from the *overt aggression* and *prosocial behavior* subscales of the CSBT and the *social victimization* subscale of the self report RSEQ. Items were adapted in order to be used as a peer-ratings measure for this study. Peer-ratings of the behaviors of classmates have been utilized in other bullying research (e.g. Salmivalli et al., 1996) and allows for students to report on behavior that parents and teachers may not be aware of. Additionally, the ratings provided by classmates allows for multiple assessments of behavior. Peer-ratings as a method of data collection for aggression studies has been called "arguably, the best method to identify bullies, aggressors, and victims" (Leff, Power, & Goldstein, 2004, p. 274).

For this study, several changes were made to the items of the CSBS and self report RSEQ in order to create a peer-ratings measure. First, the wording of *social victimization* items that reference behavior experienced by the individual on the self report RSEQ was changed to reflect social aggression behavior of others. The CSBS prosocial and overt aggression items were changed from the nomination format to a ratings approach in which each participating child in a class rates every other participating child in their class on the frequency of behaviors. A three point Likert scale was developed for the pilot version that required respondents to rate whether another child exhibited 14 specific behaviors using *yes, no,* or *sometimes*. The subscales of the RSEQ-peer report that function as dependent variables for this study are the *overt aggression* and *prosocial behavior* subscales. Scores for each participant for overt aggression and prosocial behavior were calculated by averaging his or her peer-rated scores on these subscales. Mean scores for each participant were continuous, ranging between 3 and 9 for the *overt aggression* subscale and 4 and 12 for the *prosocial behavior* subscale.

Normative Beliefs Approving of Aggression Scale

The Normative Beliefs Approving of Aggression Scale (NOBAGS; Huesmann & Guerra, 1997) is a self-report, 20 item instrument that provides a measure of children's beliefs about the appropriateness of physical and verbal aggression. The NOBAGS has two subscales, a *retaliatory beliefs* subscale (12 items) that measures beliefs about the appropriateness of aggressive responses to provocation and a *general beliefs* subscale (8 items) that measures overall attitudes towards the use of aggression. The NOBAGS was

used in this study to measure participants' overall beliefs about the acceptability of aggression, thus only the *general beliefs* subscale was collected and analyzed (see Appendix E). Respondents to the NOBAGS read an item (e.g. *In general, it is wrong to hit other people*) and choose between four choices as to which best reflects their beliefs: *It's perfectly okay*, *It's sort of OK*, *It's sort of wrong*, and *It's really wrong*. Items are scored between 1 (*It's really wrong*) and 4 (*It's perfectly okay)* with each respondent receiving an overall score between 8 and 32 for the eight items of the subscale. Huesmann and Guerra found a Chronbach's Alpha of .82 (n=766) in a study with fourth grade respondents for the *general beliefs* subscale.

Pilot Procedures

Assignment to Condition

The two participating schools from EISD were recruited in Spring, 2005 and letters of intent were signed by each school to take part in both the intervention and the collection of measures. One of the schools was expected to have five fourth grade classrooms and was selected to serve as the treatment school based on the larger number of potential participants. The school that was to serve as both the pilot for measures and the intervention subsequently decided to participate only in piloting measures which necessitated the recruitment of an additional school for the piloting of the intervention. After failing to receive interest from the other schools in EISD, the research team broadened the search for the third school and received a commitment for participation from the charter school in AISD.

The decision to pilot both the measures and the intervention was deemed appropriate due to the fact that both were untested in their current forms. The purpose of the pilot phase was to ensure that measurement, data collection procedures, and delivery of the intervention were appropriate for fourth grade children.

Consent for participation

Measures Pilot School. Following the acceptance of the study by IRB, the researchers provided information packets with consent forms for each of the potential fourth grade participants as well as school administrators. Parents were also provided with the email addresses and phone numbers of the researchers in the event that they had questions. In addition, two information sessions were scheduled at the school in which researchers were present to meet with parents. Whereas no parents attended the information sessions, several parents sent emails with clarifying questions. Active consent was required in order for children to miss two hours of class time and participate in data collection. By providing consent, parents agreed for their children to fill out questionnaires and to be rated by their peers. Parents were provided a two week time period to return the consent forms to their child's teachers. To increase the rate of return of the consent forms, University of Texas pencils were given to students once they return their consent forms, regardless of level of consent by their parents.

Intervention Pilot School. Parents in the two upper grades of the intervention pilot school were provided information packets detailing the objectives of the Kids Supporting Kids program as well as the dates that the program would be occurring in their children's classes. Because this program occurred during the school day as part of the regular

classroom curriculum, parents needed to provide written notification if they were to choose that their child not participate. The phone numbers and email addresses of researchers were provided and one parent communicated concerns about her child being exposed to the program on several occasions. She ultimately decided to allow her child to participate, which allowed for a 100% participation rate with the program.

Data Collection

Training of Administrators of Measures. For both the pilot and treatment phases, the research battery was administered by teams of graduate students recruited from the University of Texas School Psychology program. Prior to data collection, administrators were informed of procedures in order to ensure a standardized protocol. Administrators of measures were provided with written materials detailing the process of data collection including instructions to be read aloud to each student group. Written instructions included standardized explanations of the program, the process of data collection, and standardized instructions for each measure. Additionally, researchers provided administrators with training to minimize differences between administration teams. Specific topics covered in the training included: 1) how to talk to students about the importance of keeping responses to measures confidential; 2) how to talk to teachers about remaining aware of students gossiping about their rating following administration; and 3) answers to anticipated questions posed by students.

Pilot school. The first data collection at the pilot school took place following the return of consent forms in December, 2005. Administration of measures occured during two one hour sessions over a two day period. Fourth grade students whose parents had

provided consent were excused from class to complete measures with the administrators in the cafeteria. During the first session, researchers read out loud to students a description of the study and the reason for data collection. Students were encouraged to ask questions or voice concerns and all signed an assent to participate (see Appendix G). Researchers instructed students that their answers would remain confidential and that their honest answers would provide a better understanding of how fourth grade "really is".

On the first day, administrators of measures divided the children into three groups by gender with one administrator per group. The instrument that was completed on that day was the NOBAGS. This measure was read aloud in each of the small groups to ensure that the questions were understandable to fourth graders.

On the second day of data collection, students completed the RSEQ-peer report for each of the other participating fourth grade students. Students were seated on cafeteria benches in a manner that enabled privacy. Students were given a packet of RSEQ-peer report forms with each form having the name of a student who was to be rated. Boys rated every other participating boy before rating the girls. Similarly, girls rated girls before rating boys. The order in which each boy or girl was rated was randomly determined. An administrator spoke to the students about the importance of keeping their responses private and read aloud standardized instructions for the RSEQ-peer report and then each of the 14 items of the measure. Students were instructed to ask questions if they did not understand items or what they were to do. After the completion of the first form, the administrators allowed students to go through the remaining forms at their own pace

and stated that they were available to provide assistance if needed. Several students did not recognize the name of students that were to be rating. In most cases they were able to complete the rating if the unknown child was carefully pointed out to them. In the rare cases that the child still did not know the child they were instructed to leave the measure blank. Students moved through their rating forms at varying rates, and several were unable to complete all of their forms by the end of the hour. The researchers concluded that some students may have moved through the forms at such a quick pace that their responses were unlikely to be valid, while others were not able to read quickly enough to complete the measure in the allotted time. For these reasons, it was decided for the treatment phase to read the RSEQ-peer report out loud to students for each of the peers that they were to rate.

Pilot Intervention

Classroom intervention. Although the Kids Supporting Kids program was intended to be delivered once a week for six weeks, the principal and teachers of the pilot intervention school requested that the program be completed within three weeks. Each intervention session lasted approximately 50 minutes.

The researchers served as intervention facilitators in addition to two other graduate students with training in the School Psychology doctoral program at the University of Texas. Both of the researchers had previously co-led an ecological, school-based, anti-bullying intervention. Facilitators were assigned to create two, two person teams to lead intervention groups. Classrooms were divided by gender and separated into gender specific groups (two classrooms per group), resulting in a total of four groups.

The decision to deliver the interventions by gender served several functions. The first was to provide both boys and girls a forum to address their experiences with bullying. Based on the literature on gender differences in bullying, it was expected that elementary aged boys and girls were likely having somewhat different experiences. The second reason for this organization was to alter the existing classroom dynamics so that the emphasis of the intervention was not on the specific individual bullies and victims in each classroom, but instead on the interaction patterns that occur in classrooms in general.

A treatment manual (see Appendix H) was developed by the research team following a review of the literature on ecological intervention for overt and social/relational aggression. The objectives of the treatment program are to reduce bullying behaviors through an ecological approach by: 1) educating students on types of bullying (physical and social), the role of the bystander in contributing to the existence of bullying, and the consequences for individuals and the classroom environment when bullying occurs; 2) challenging sympathetic attitudes about the appropriateness of bullying; 3) providing students with strategies for intervening when they observe bullying; 4) modeling bystander interventions; 5) giving students an opportunity to practice bystander interventions; and 6) empowering classrooms to develop a code of conduct for working together to reduce bullying.

A checklist of objectives was developed for each session of the treatment program for multiple reasons. The first is that each of the intervention teams was provided with a specific outline of objectives to be covered in order to increase treatment fidelity. Classroom teachers were provided each week with the checklist for the upcoming session

in order to familiarize themselves with the program. During the sessions, teachers were present to attend to whether program facilitators addressed each point on the checklist. There were three benefits of this approach. The first is that teachers had a responsibility that required them to remain engaged throughout the program. It is important that teachers familiarize themselves with the curriculum as they would need to maintain a classroom environment that was unsupportive of bullying behaviors after administrators were gone. The second benefit is that treatment fidelity was documented by an objective observer. This ensured that each session addressed treatment objectives, regardless of facilitators. The third benefit is that this method served to document treatment fidelity without requiring parents to consent to audio or video taping of the intervention program. It was possible that some parents would have been reticent to agree to their children being taped and would withhold consent to participate.

The researchers made several changes to the treatment program for reasons related to the difference between the pilot population and the population that the treatment manual had been developed for. Specifically, the combined structure of the pilot school classes which resulted in second graders taking part in the program alongside fourth graders, required more emphasis on concrete behaviors rather than more abstract concepts such as attitudes. In addition, the experiential learning emphasis of the school caused the researchers to limit lecture and allow the students to move around the room whenever possible. The developers of the manual met following each session to process the strengths and weaknesses of that day and discuss changes in the program for the treatment school.

Teacher Intervention. The research team provided ongoing consultation throughout the intervention to participating classroom teachers for issues related to bullying. In addition, three teacher group meetings were scheduled to occur at the pilot intervention school. The first occurred prior to the beginning of the classroom intervention, the second during the week of the third classroom session, and the third was scheduled for after the sixth and final classroom session. The purpose of the teacher program was to acknowledge and address the important role teachers play in either supporting or reducing bullying related behaviors in the classroom. The goals of the teacher program were to: 1) gain teachers' support for the intervention; 2) provide education on the consequences of bullying; 3) address any teacher misconceptions about bullying; and 4) empower teachers to maintain a no-tolerance classroom environment towards bullying. The teachers participated actively in the first two teacher sessions and offered feedback to the researchers about the program as well as solicited advice for how to address specific bullying situations within their classrooms. Feedback from the teachers was used to tailor the program towards the specific interests of the school (e.g. more activity versus lecture). The third teacher session was cancelled due to a scheduling conflict and, despite the researchers' attempts, was never rescheduled. This lack of interest for the final teachers session was interpreted to likely be a result of the teachers feeling busy and that, with the program being "over", it was no longer a high priority.

Treatment Phase

Participants

The population for the treatment phase of this study was drawn from a school within the Eanes Independent School district (refer to pilot participants section for district information). Similar to the pilot measures school, this school has achieved recognition as a National Blue Ribbon School and exemplary status from the Texas Education Agency (Eanesisd.tx.schoolwebpages.com, 2005). There are four fourth grade classes in this school with a total of 77 students. Each of the students returned their consent forms with 72 of the parents (94%) providing full consent for their children to participate in both completion of measures and the intervention. One student elected to remove herself from the study following the completion of pre-intervention measures, resulting in a final number of 71 participants (92%). Of the 71 participants, 38 were boys and 33 were girls. See table 1 for additional demographic information.

Table 1

Demographics of the Treatment Population (n=71)

Variable	Percent
Age	
9	38.9
10	61.1
Living Situation	
Live with both parents	91.7
Divorced parents	2.8
Divorced and living with mother	1.4
Divorced and living with father	1.4
Joint custody	2.8
Race/Ethnicity	
Caucasian	77.8
African American	2.8
Asian/Pacific Islander	6.9
Native American	2.8
Other	8.3
Selected more than one option	1.4

Measures

Demographic Information Sheet

Participants completed a self-report form providing demographic information about themselves (see Appendix A). Information gathered included age, gender, racial/ethnic group membership, in addition to current family structure.

The Revised Social Experiences Questionnaire- Peer Report

For the treatment phase of this study the same 14 items were used as were administered during the piloting of the measure (refer to pilot measures for further explanation of the RSEQ-peer report). However, the scaling was expanded from a three

point Likert scale to allow for five possible responses. Whereas respondents had previously been given the options of *yes, no,* and *sometimes* during pilot, for the treatment phase the choices were *never, almost never, sometimes, almost always,* and *always.* The rationale for this change was to allow for more variance and provide language in the response choices that was reasoned to be a better fit for responding to the frequency of behaviors. The subscales of the RSEQ-peer report that functioned as dependent variables for this study were the *overt aggression* and *prosocial behavior* subscales. Overall scores for each participant for overt aggression and prosocial behavior were calculated by averaging his or her peer-rated scores on these subscales. Mean scores for each participant were continuous, ranging between 3 and 15 for the *overt aggression* subscale and 4 and 20 for the *prosocial behavior* subscale. Although respondents completed 14 items, the item *Do you look up to or want to be like this person?* was subsequently dropped from the *prosocial behavior* subscale for several reasons. First, the Chronbach's Alpha coefficient of that item in comparison to the other prosocial items was relatively poor. Secondly, the researchers concluded that this item is a better measure of classmate popularity than prosocial behavior.

Normative Beliefs Approving of Aggression Scale

The NOBAGS was used in identical form for the treatment phase as it had been in the pilot phase (refer to pilot measures for further explanation of the NOBAGS). Respondents to the NOBAGS read an item (e.g. *In general, it is wrong to hit other people*) and chose between four choices as to which best reflects their beliefs: *It's perfectly okay*, *It's sort of OK*, *It's sort of wrong*, and *It's really wrong*. Items were

scored between 1 (*It's really wrong*) and 4 (*It's perfectly okay)* with each respondent receiving an overall score between 8 and 32 for the eight items of the subscale.

Procedures

Consent for participation

The researchers provided information packets with consent forms for each of the potential fourth grade participants as well as school administrators. On the consent form parents were offered two levels of consent: 1. that their child could participate in the intervention program; and 2. that their child could complete measures. Similar to the pilot phase, University of Texas pencils were given to students once they returned their consent forms, regardless of level of consent by their parents. After two weeks with very few consent forms returned, the researchers provided the fourth grade teachers with additional forms to be signed at a parent-teacher night that was to occur at the school. The majority of the forms were signed that night with the rest collected following personal email request from the teachers.

Parents were provided with the email addresses and phone numbers of the researchers in the event that they had questions. One parent asked via email to view the measures to be used in the study. She elected for her child to not participate in completing measures or in the program, with the stated reason being that she was uncomfortable with her child talking about or rating other students. Two information sessions were scheduled at the school in which researchers were present to meet with parents. One parent attended an information session with questions about the program and ultimately provided consent for her child to participate.

Data Collection

Pre-Intervention Data Collection. Pre-intervention data collection occurred two weeks prior to the beginning of the classroom intervention. The two sessions of data collection took place on consecutive days during hour long class sessions. In order to meet the scheduling needs of the school, measures were collected at the same time in each of the four classrooms. On the first day, two classrooms had two graduate school facilitators while in the other two classrooms the two chief investigators collected data on their own. The procedure in the four classrooms was identical, with boys and girls separated on each side of the classrooms and an explanation of the study was read to the students. Each student utilized a "privacy folder" to shield his or her responses from others. Facilitators provided students with assent forms and explained that they did not need to participate if they didn't want to. Following the collection of assent forms (100% of the students provided assent), facilitators passed out packets of measures. Measures collected on the first day were the Demographic Information Sheet and the NOBAGS. At the end of the session, facilitators explained that participants' responses should be kept private and that someone from the study would remain at the school to meet with students if they had any questions or concerns. On the first day, no students elected to meet with a researcher. One student did not complete any items of the NOBAGS which was undiscovered until after the intervention program had begun. It was decided that the student's responses should not be collected as they would be influenced by participating in the program.

On the second day, two facilitators were present in each of the four classrooms. Facilitators reminded students about keeping their responses confidential and that someone would again remain at the school for consultation if they experienced discomfort as a result of completing the measures. A facilitator explained the procedures of the RSEQ-peer report and that they would be rating their classmates. Students were provided with a stack of the forms, with their own name taped to the front. They were advised to pull off their name and reminded that researchers were interested in the responses of fourth grade students in general, rather than his or her specific responses. Researchers were able to later identify students' responses from specific numbers that were included on each form. Students were encouraged to note the name of the student on the first form and respond as to the frequency that the individual had exhibited each of the behaviors in the previous two weeks. Students completed an RSEQ-peer report for each of the participating students in their class. One facilitator read aloud the items of the RSEQ-peer report for each student to be rated while the other facilitator assisted students that had questions or difficulties. Following the second day, several students sought out a researcher to talk to about filling out the peer-ratings form. Specific concerns mentioned were: 1. realization that they themselves had bullied in the past; 2. worries about how they had been rated by others; and 3. questions about how to handle friends who bullied. The researcher met with each student until they felt that their issue was resolved. A researcher met with students who had been absent for either data collection day within a week in order to obtain their data.

Post-Intervention Data Collection. Post-intervention data collection occurred in the week following the final classroom session during two consecutive days. In this phase, the NOBAGS and RSEQ-peer report were administered in their identical forms as during the first data collection. Unlike pre-intervention data collection, the first session took only 30 minutes as a result of not needing the Demographic Information Sheet and the assent form. Students were encouraged to think of their current attitudes for the NOBAGS and the behavior of their classmates only in the previous two weeks. Procedures for follow-up were identical as those that occurred during pre-intervention.

Intervention

Classroom intervention. Similar to the pilot school, the principal and teachers of the treatment school requested that the program be completed more quickly than the intended design of once a week for six weeks. The researchers scheduled with the teachers to have session once in the first week, three times in the next week, and twice in the last week. Each of the sessions was separated by at least two days and lasted approximately 60 minutes.

The procedures for delivering the intervention were identical in the treatment school as they had been in the pilot school. Similarly, the two researchers served as intervention facilitators in addition to two other graduate students with training in the School Psychology doctoral program at the University of Texas. Facilitators were assigned to create two, two person teams to lead intervention groups. Classrooms were divided by gender and separated into gender specific groups (two classrooms per group), resulting in a total of four groups with a range of between 16 to 21 students per group.

Prior to the beginning of the intervention, the researchers implemented changes to the Kids Supporting Kids treatment manual (see Appendix H) based on their experience during pilot. Specific changes included changing the focus on bullying from being about people (i.e. the "bully" or "victim") to being behavior focused (i.e. bullying behaviors). The intent was to alter the thinking of the bully as being "someone else" and illustrate, through specific behaviors, that most people have both bullied others and been bullied. The objective of the treatment program remained to reduce bullying behaviors through an ecological approach by: 1) educating students on types of bullying (physical and social), the role of the bystander in contributing to the existence of bullying, and the consequences for individuals and the classroom environment when bullying occurs; 2) challenging sympathetic attitudes about the appropriateness of bullying; 3) providing students with strategies for intervening when they observe bullying; 4) modeling bystander interventions; 5) giving students an opportunity to practice bystander interventions; and 6) empowering classrooms to develop a code of conduct for working together to reduce bullying.

Facilitators followed the outline of each classroom session as outlined in the manual. Both the classroom teacher and one of the facilitators completed the checklist of objectives that was developed for each session. The facilitator was able to ensure that each objective was being reached during the session and also served as an additional rater for treatment fidelity with the teacher's ratings. For both of the groups across six sessions 100% of session objectives were met. An additional benefit of the teacher completing

session checklists was that each of the teachers remained engaged in the sessions and, as a result, became educated themselves on the tenets of the Kids Supporting Kids program

Teacher Intervention. Three meetings with the four fourth grade teachers and the two researchers occurred alongside the classroom intervention. The first during the week of the first classroom session, the second following the third classroom session, and the third followed the sixth and final classroom session. For each teacher session, the researchers followed the outlines from the manual. The teachers participated actively in each session and communicated their approval of the classroom interventions. Of specific interest to the teachers was the opportunity to discuss their classroom dynamics and previous attempts to address bullying in their classes. The group format allowed for both the researchers and the teacher group to share ideas and strategies for addressing bullying behaviors and attitudes favorable to aggression. Additional contact was made with teachers via email, with researchers sending them the objectives of upcoming classroom sessions. In each email, consultation was offered and feedback solicited for their reactions to the program and how their classes were responding. In contrast to their openness during face to face interactions, none of the teachers chose to communicate via email.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Pilot Study Analyses

Descriptive Statistics

The means, standard deviations, and Chronbach's Alpha coefficients of the dependent variables for the pilot phase of this study are presented in Table 2. In general, participants endorsed few favorable attitudes towards aggression on the Normative Beliefs Approving of Aggression Scale (NOBAGS; Huesmann & Guerra, 1997). There were three participant scores that were at least one standard deviation above the mean with one participant scoring three standard deviations above the mean. Each of the participants scoring at least one standard deviation above the mean endorsed that it was either *sort of OK* or *perfectly OK* to hit other children or engage in physical fights. Overall, respondents rated other participants as exhibiting low levels of overt aggression and moderate levels of prosocial behavior on the Revised Social Experiences Questionnaire-peer report (RSEQ-peer report; Paquette & Underwood, 1999). For the *overt aggression* subscale, five participants were rated at least one standard deviation above the mean with one individual rated at a level that was two standard deviations above the mean. Each of these five individuals were rated by their peers as *sometimes* engaging in aggressive behaviors including starting physical fights, hitting other children, or calling others names. Internal consistency was high for each of the piloted scales.

Pearson two-tailed correlations were conducted to determine the relationship between participant scores for peer-rated prosocial behavior and overt aggression and self-rated attitudes towards the appropriateness of aggression. Correlations were analyzed

in order to ensure that the selected instruments demonstrated similar relationships between scales with this population as had been demonstrated in previous research. Correlations between scales are presented in Table 3. A statistically significant negative correlation was found for peer-rated overt aggression and prosocial behavior. Statistical significance was not demonstrated for the correlations between the other variables of the study.

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, and Chronbach's Alpha Coefficients for Pilot Population (n=25)

Scale	M	SD	Chronbach's Alpha
NOBAGS *General Beliefs* Scale	10.04	2.53	.81
RSEQ- *Overt Aggression* Scale	3.72	.64	.93
RSEQ- *Prosocial Behavior* Scale	6.74	.75	.96

Note: The NOBAGS has a range of 8-32; each of the scales of the RSEQ-peer report have a range of 3-15.

Table 3

Pearson Intercorrelations Between Scales for Pilot Population

Scale	NOBAGS	RSEQ-Overt	RSEQ-Prosocial
RSEQ-Prosocial	-.29	-.77**	1.00
RSEQ-Overt	.30	1.00	
NOBAGS	1.00		

** $p<.01$

T-tests were conducted with the Levene Test for Equality of Variance to compare the mean scores of boys and girls on each of the piloted measures. These comparisons were conducted to determine if gender differences would be demonstrated on these measures that would be consistent with previous research. Results indicated that a statistically significant difference was not present (t=1.408, p=.188) between the scores of boys and girls on the NOBAGS. Statistically significant gender differences were found on t-tests for both the *prosocial behavior* (t=-3.357, p=.003) and *overt aggression* (t=3.486, p=.005) subscales of the RSEQ-peer report. Girls were rated by their peers to be significantly more prosocial (7.11 compared to 6.26), whereas boys received significantly higher scores (4.16 compared to 3.37) for overt aggression. The gender differences for prosocial behavior and overt aggression are consistent with previous research and the hypotheses of this study. The expected statistically significant difference

between the scores of boys and girls on the NOBAGS was not found for the pilot population.

Treatment Analyses

Descriptive Statistics

The means, standard deviations, and Chronbach's Alpha coefficients of the dependent variables for the pre and post-intervention phases of this study are presented in Table 4. Similar to the pilot sample, participants from the treatment sample at pre-intervention endorsed few favorable attitudes towards the appropriateness of aggression as measured by the NOBAGS. Specifically, 70% of respondents had scores of 8 or 9 on a scale with a range of 8 to 32 (see Figure 2). Of the 70 respondents, three scored one standard deviation above the mean and one scored two standard deviations above the mean. With the mean score on the NOBAGS being so low, even the participant scoring two standard deviations above the mean endorsed attitudes towards aggression that were not of practical significance.

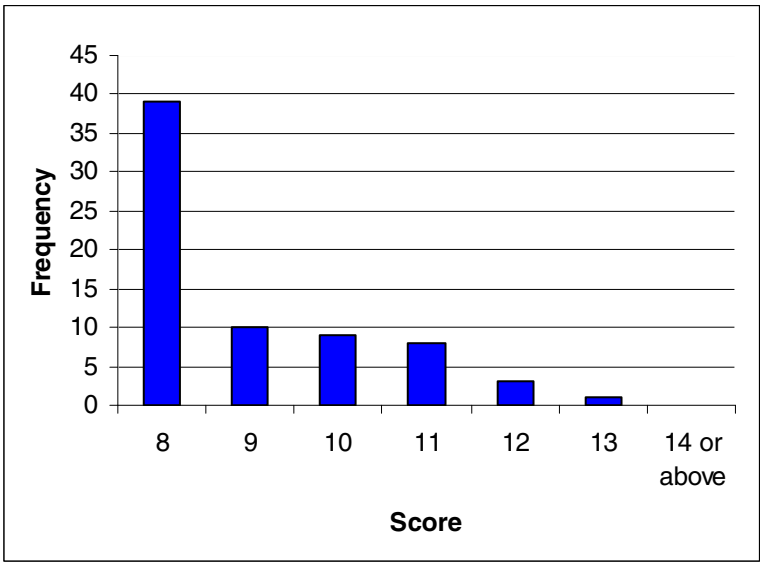

Figure 2. Frequency of individual scores on NOBAGS at pre-intervention
Note: Range of scores= 8 to 32.

Overall, respondents rated other participants as exhibiting low levels of overt aggression and high levels of prosocial behavior. For overt aggression, 11 participants were rated at least one standard deviation above the mean with two individuals apiece rated at levels that were two and three standard deviations above the mean. Each of these 11 individuals were rated by their peers as *sometimes* engaging in aggressive behaviors including starting physical fights, hitting other children, or calling others names. For the four participants scoring at least two standard deviations above the mean, multiple raters characterized them as *almost always* exhibiting one or more of the aforementioned behaviors. Thus, although the group average for overt aggression was low, 16% of participants exhibited moderate to high levels of overt aggression.

Internal consistency was high for each of the scales of the RSEQ-peer report at both pre and post-intervention. However, the Chronbach's Alpha coefficient of .56 for

the NOBAGS *general beliefs* subscale at pre-intervention can be considered low. An analysis of the frequency table (see Figure 2) of individual responses on the NOBAGS suggests that the low Chronbach's Alpha may be due to the lack of variance caused by the majority of respondents scoring eight or nine at pre-intervention. Internal consistency was acceptable for post-intervention scores on the NOBAGS.

Table 4

Means, Standard Deviations, and Chronbach's Alpha Coefficients for Treatment Population (n=71)

Scale	M	SD	Chronbach's Alpha
NOBAGS *General Beliefs*			
Pre	8.97	1.33	.56
Post	9.34	1.81	.71
RSEQ-*Overt Aggression*			
Pre	4.35	1.43	.98
Post	4.17	1.14	.96
RSEQ-*Prosocial Behavior*			
Pre	10.24	1.7	.98
Post	10.0	1.5	.95

Note: Note: The NOBAGS has a range of 8-32; each of the scales of the RSEQ-peer report have a range of 3-15; *n*=70 for NOBAGS.

Pearson two-tailed correlations were conducted with both pre- and post-intervention data to determine the relationship between participant scores for peer-rated prosocial behavior and overt aggression, and with self-rated attitudes towards the appropriateness of aggression. Pre-intervention correlations between the RSEQ-peer report scales and the NOBAGS are presented in Table 5. Consistent with the findings with the pilot population, a statistically significant negative correlation was found

between the RSEQ-peer report scores for overt aggression and prosocial behavior. The correlations between the NOBAGS and each of the scales of the RSEQ-peer report reached statistically significant levels which were not present with the pilot data.

Table 5

Pre-intervention Pearson Intercorrelations Between Scales

Scale	NOBAGS	RSEQ-Overt	RSEQ-Prosocial
RSEQ-Prosocial	-.28*	-.77**	1.00
RSEQ-Overt	.37*	1.00	
NOBAGS	1.0		

*$p<.05$.
** $p<.01$.

Post-intervention correlations between scales are presented in Table 6. Again, a statistically significant negative correlation was present between the RSEQ-peer report scores for overt aggression and prosocial behavior. The correlations between the NOBAGS and each of the scales of the RSEQ-peer report did not reach statistically significant levels as they did with the pre-intervention data.

Table 6

Post-intervention Pearson Intercorrelations Between Scales

Scale	NOBAGS	RSEQ -Overt	RSEQ-Prosocial
RSEQ-Prosocial	-.14	-.75**	1.00
RSEQ-Overt	.10	1.00	
NOBAGS	1.00		

** $p<.01$.

Tests of Hypotheses

Hypotheses were developed to answer the research questions of whether participants in the intervention would demonstrate: 1) decreased attitudes favorable to aggression; 2) increased prosocial behavior; and 3) reduced overt aggression. Three identical hypotheses were tested for each of the three dependent variables used in this study. For each of the dependent variables, hypotheses made predictions at the levels of: 1) whole group, 2) gender, and 3) classroom. Hypotheses 1-3 examined differences on the NOBAGS, hypotheses 4-6 examined differences on the *prosocial behavior* subscale of the RSEQ-peer report, and hypotheses 7-9 examined differences on the *overt aggression* subscale of the RSEQ-peer report. Three repeated measures analyses of variance (ANOVA) were used to examine differences between data of each of the dependent variables at pre-intervention time 1 and post-intervention time 2.

Following intervention, will participants have changed attitudes towards the use of overt aggression?

Test of Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 1 predicted that participants would demonstrate significant mean score differences on the average self-reported *general beliefs* subscale of the NOBAGS at post-intervention from their scores at pre-intervention. Results of the repeated measures ANOVA indicated a statistically significant difference between scores at time 1 and time 2, $F(1, 62) = 5.45$, p=.023 (see Table 7). Hypotheses 1 was only partially confirmed however, as a statistically significant Gender X Time interaction was not present (p=.069). Thus, changes in attitudes towards the use of aggression may be better understood by considering the influence of gender rather than whole group differences. An inspection of Figure 3 indicates that although girls reported lower scores than boys on the NOBAGS at time 1 (8.79 to 9.16), at time 2 girls reported higher scores than boys (9.48 to 9.24).

In contrast to an anticipated decrease, self- reported scores on the NOBAGS increased over time. This increase resulted in a partial eta squared (η^2) of .074 which can he considered a moderate effect (Cohen, 1977). Following intervention, average scores increased from 8.97 to 9.34, which remains at the extreme lower end of possible scores on the *general beliefs* subscale of the NOBAGS (range=8 to 32).

Table 7

Results of Repeated Measures ANOVA for General Beliefs Subscale of NOBAGS

Source	SS	*df*	MS	*F*	*p*	η^2
Time	5.006	1	5.006	4.947	.03	.074
Time X Gender	3.47	1	3.47	3.429	.069	.052
Time X Classroom	1.455	3	.485	.479	.698	.023
Time X Gender X Classroom	1.917	3	.639	.631	.598	.030
Error	62.738	62	1.012			

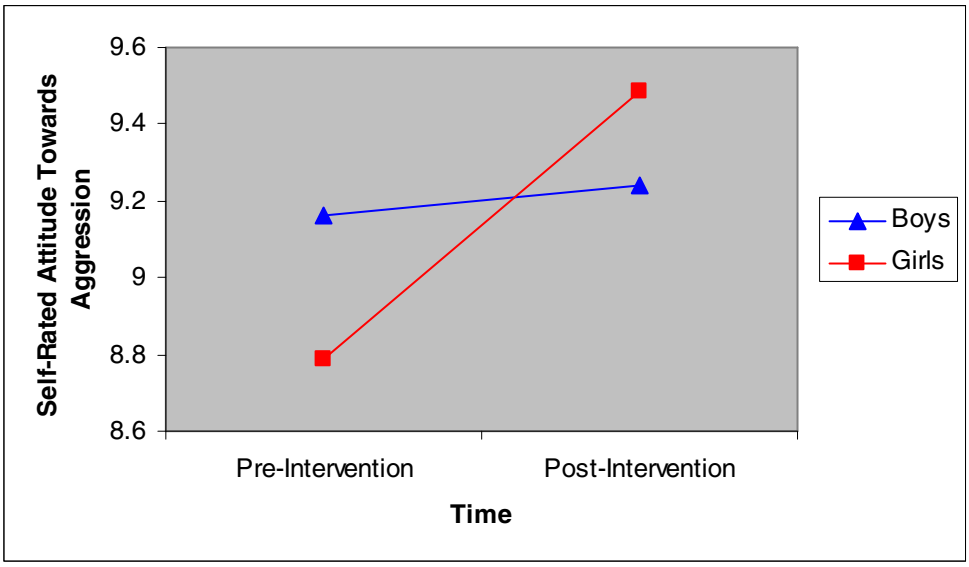

Figure 3: Changes in Attitudes Towards Aggression by Gender

Test of Hypothesis 2. Hypothesis 2 predicted that mean differences would exist for boys and girls on scores of the *general beliefs* subscale of the NOBAGS at pre-intervention and that boys and girls would respond similarly to the intervention. Hypothesis 2 was partially confirmed as results of the repeated measure ANOVA indicated that a Gender X Time interaction was not present (p=.069). These results confirmed that there was not a statistically significant difference for how boys and girls responded to the intervention (see Figure 3).

Results failed to support the prediction that differences would exist at pre-intervention between boys and girls in self-reported attitudes towards the appropriateness of aggression, with boys reporting more favorable attitudes. A t-test was conducted with the Levene Test for Equality of Variance to compare the mean scores of boys and girls on the pre-intervention NOBAGS scores. A statistically significant difference was not present, (t=1.263, p=.211), thus, this prediction was not confirmed.

Test of Hypothesis 3. Hypothesis 3 predicted that mean differences of scores on the *general beliefs* subscale of the NOBAGS would not be present among the four participating classrooms of the intervention. The first prediction of this hypothesis was that there would not be mean differences between the classrooms at pre-intervention time 1. This prediction was supported by an analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicating that pre-intervention scores on the NOBAGS did not differ among classrooms, $F(3, 67) = .616$, $p = .607$. The second prediction of hypothesis 3 was that an interaction effect would not exist between classroom and time. Results of the repeated measures ANOVA determined that no interaction effect was present. This second prediction of hypothesis 3 was confirmed, as the change in participants' scores on the NOBAGS over time was not determined by classroom.

Following intervention, will participants score higher on peer-reported prosocial behavior than they did prior to intervention?

Test of Hypothesis 4. Hypothesis 4 predicted that participants would demonstrate significant mean score differences on the average peer-rated *prosocial behavior* subscale of the RSEQ-peer report at post-intervention from their scores at pre-intervention. Results of the repeated measures ANOVA indicated a statistically significant difference between scores at time 1 and time 2, $F(1, 63) = 8.59$, $p = .005$ (see Table 8). Hypothesis 4 was confirmed, although rather than the hypothesized increase in average scores, scores decreased from 10.24 to 10.0. This decrease resulted in a partial eta squared (η^2) of .074 which can he considered a moderate effect (Cohen, 1977). As shown in Table 8, changes in prosocial behavior from time 1 to time 2 may be better understood by considering the

influence of gender rather than whole group differences. For further explanation, refer to the results for hypothesis 5.

Table 8

Results of Repeated Measures ANOVA for Prosocial Behavior Subscale of RSEQ-peer report

Source	SS	*df*	MS	*F*	*p*	η^2
Time	1.59	1	1.59	8.59	.005	.12
Time X Gender	1.213	1	1.213	6.552	.013	.094
Time X Classroom	.377	3	.126	.679	.568	.031
Time X Gender X Classroom	1.905	3	.635	3.431	.022	.140
Error	11.659	63	.185			

Test of Hypothesis 5. Hypothesis 5 predicted that mean differences would exist for boys and girls on peer-rated scores of the *prosocial behavior* subscale of the RSEQ-peer report. The first prediction within this hypothesis was that differences would exist at pre-intervention between boys and girls on this scale, with girls being rated by their peers as more prosocial than boys. A t-test was conducted with the Levene Test for Equality of Variance to compare the mean scores of boys and girls on the pre-intervention *prosocial behavior* scores. The first prediction of hypothesis 5 was confirmed, as girls (mean=11.03) had statistically significantly higher scores than boys (mean=9.53) for prosocial behavior, (t=-4.221, p=.001). The second prediction of hypothesis 5 was that there would not be an interaction effect between gender and time, as it was hypothesized that boys and girls would respond similarly to the intervention. Results of the repeated measure ANOVA indicated that a Gender X Time interaction was statistically significant with gender influencing change in prosocial behavior from time 1 to time 2 (see Figure

4). The presence of the interaction effect between gender and time failed to confirm the second prediction of hypothesis 5. Figure 4 demonstrates that while the average scores for boys decreased slightly (9.53 to 9.46) from time 1 to time 2, girls showed a more substantial drop (11.04 to 10.62). The partial eta squared (η^2) of the Time X Gender interaction was .094, which can be classified as a moderate effect (Cohen, 1977).

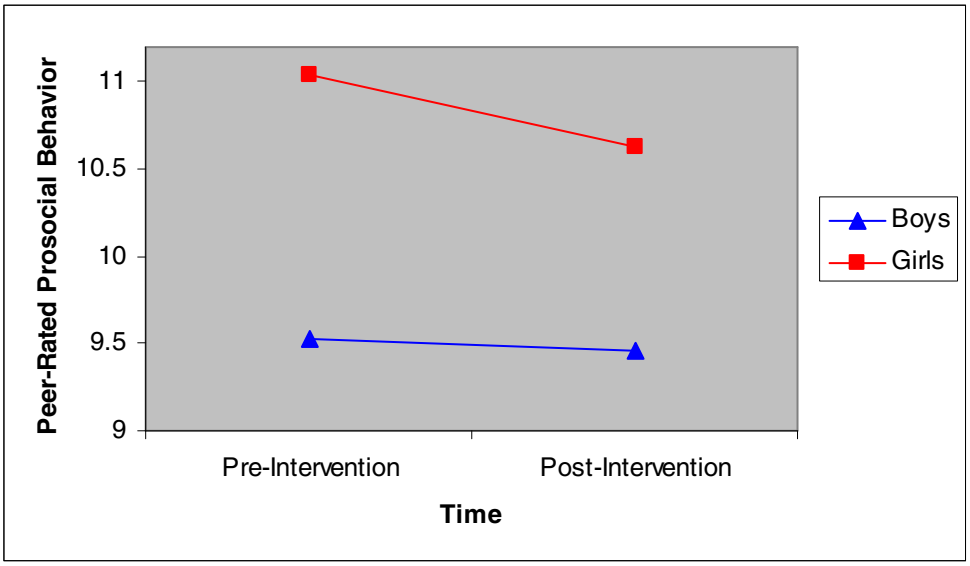

Figure 4: Changes in Prosocial Behavior by Gender

Test of Hypothesis 6. Hypothesis 6 predicted that mean differences of scores on the *prosocial behavior* subscale of the RSEQ-peer report would not be present among the four participating classrooms in the intervention. The first prediction of this hypothesis was that there would not be mean differences between the classrooms at pre-intervention time 1. This prediction was supported as an analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicated that pre-intervention scores on the *prosocial behavior* subscale did not differ among classrooms, $F(3, 68) = .473$, $p = .702$. The second prediction of hypothesis 3 was that an

interaction effect would not exist between classroom and time. Results of the repeated measures ANOVA determined that no interaction effect was present between classroom and time; however, a statistically significant interaction was found for time by gender by classroom. The partial eta squared (η^2) of this interaction was .140, which can be considered a large effect (Cohen, 1977).

As is demonstrated in Table 9, this interaction effect is likely driven by the statistical changes in Classrooms one and two. These classrooms had the two lowest pre-intervention male averages and the two highest female averages for prosocial behavior. The male averages in each of these two classrooms increased at time 2 whereas the female averages in each of these two classrooms decreased.

Table 9

Average Peer-Rated Prosocial Behavior by Gender and Classroom

Classroom	Time 1	Time 2
Classroom 1		
Boys	8.119	8.476
Girls	11.056	10.302
Classroom 2		
Boys	9.676	9.873
Girls	11.632	11.308
Classroom 3		
Boys	9.965	9.648
Girls	11.028	10.833
Classroom 4		
Boys	9.748	9.401
Girls	10.445	10.103

Following intervention, will participants exhibit less overt aggressive behavior than they did prior to intervention?

Test of Hypothesis 7. Hypothesis 7 predicted that participants would demonstrate significant mean score differences on the average peer-rated *overt aggression* subscale of the RSEQ-peer report at post-intervention from their scores at pre-intervention. Results of the repeated measures ANOVA indicated a statistically significant difference between scores at time 1 and time 2, $F(1, 63) = 10.72$, p=.002 (see Table 10). Hypothesis 7 was confirmed, as average scores decreased over time, 4.35 to 4.17. This decrease resulted in a partial eta squared (η^2) of .145 which can he considered a large effect (Cohen, 1977). As Table 10 illustrates, changes in overt aggression from time 1 to time 2 appear to be better understood by considering the influence of gender rather than differences at the whole group level. For further explanation, refer to the results for hypothesis 8.

Table 10

Results of repeated measures ANOVA for Overt Aggression Subscale of RSEQ-peer report

Source	SS	*df*	MS	*F*	*p*	η^2
Time	1.193	1	1.193	10.72	.002	.145
Time X Gender	1.238	1	1.238	11.126	.001	.150
Time X Classroom	.746	3	.249	2.234	.093	.096
Time X Gender X Classroom	.637	3	.212	1.909	.137	.083
Error	7.01	63	.111			

Test of Hypothesis 8. Hypothesis 8 predicted that mean differences would exist for boys and girls on peer-rated scores of the *overt aggression* subscale of the RSEQ-peer report. The first prediction within this hypothesis was that differences would exist at pre-

intervention between boys and girls on this scale, with boys being rated by their peers as more overtly aggressive than girls. A t-test was conducted with the Levene Test for Equality of Variance to compare the mean scores of boys and girls on the pre-intervention *overt aggression* scores. The first prediction of hypothesis 8 was confirmed, as boys (mean=4.85) had statistically significantly higher scores than girls (mean=3.79) on peer-rated overt aggression (t=3.455, p=.001). The second prediction of hypothesis 8 was that there would not be an interaction effect between gender and time, as it was hypothesized that boys and girls would respond similarly to the intervention. Results of the repeated measure ANOVA indicated that a gender by time interaction was statistically significant with gender influencing change in overt aggression from time 1 to time 2 (see Figure 5). Thus, the second prediction of hypothesis 8 was not confirmed. This interaction resulted in a partial eta squared (η^2) of .150 which can he classified as a large effect (Cohen, 1977). An inspection of Figure 5 demonstrates that while the average score for girls was essentially unchanged from time 1 to time 2, the scores for boys dropped.

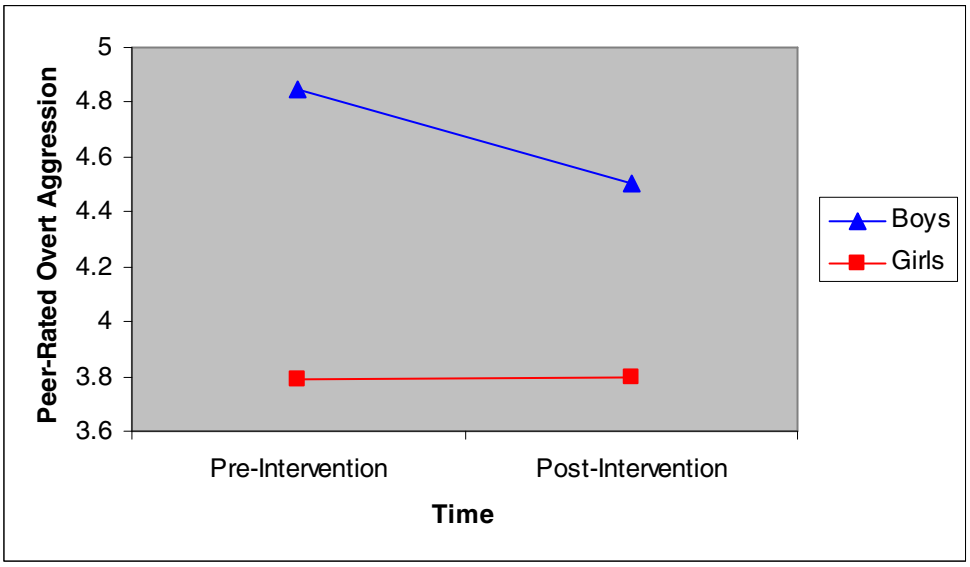

Figure 5: Changes in Overt Aggression by Gender

Test of Hypothesis 9. Hypothesis 9 predicted that mean differences of scores on the *overt aggression* subscale of the RSEQ-peer report would not be present among the four participating classrooms in the intervention. The first prediction of this hypothesis was that there would not be mean differences between the classrooms at pre-intervention time 1. This prediction was supported, as an analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicated that pre-intervention scores on the *prosocial behavior* subscale did not differ among classrooms, $F(3, 68) = 2.019$, $p = .119$. The second prediction of hypothesis 3 was that an interaction effect would not exist between classroom and time. Results of the repeated measures ANOVA confirmed this prediction, as no interaction effect was present. Thus, the change in participants' scores on the *overt aggression* subscale of the RSEQ-peer report over time was not determined by classroom.

Supplementary Analysis

Following the statistically significant findings of whole group differences on the *overt aggression* subscale of the RSEQ-peer report, a supplementary analysis was conducted to determine change in the participants rated by their peers as being the most overtly aggressive. In their research with childhood aggression, Crick, et al., (2002) characterize participants scoring at least one standard deviation above the mean in peer nominated overt aggression as being high in overt aggression for that population. Utilizing this methodology for the current study, an additional repeated measures ANOVA was conducted isolating the participants who scored at least one standard deviation above the mean on the *overt aggression* subscale of the RSEQ-peer report. Within the pre-intervention sample, 11 participants met that criterion by having scores of greater than 5.78 on the *overt aggression* subscale of the RSEQ-peer report. These 11 scores (mean=7.09, range=5.79 to 7.94) were grouped in a repeated measures ANOVA (see Table 11) with the average post-intervention scores (mean=6.25) of the same 11 participants. Results of this test indicated a significant reduction in peer-rated overt aggression. This decrease in peer-rated overt aggression resulted in a partial eta squared (η^2) of .587 which can be considered a very large effect (Cohen, 1977). An inspection of the 11 participants pre- and post-intervention scores revealed that 10 of the 11 had reduced scores at post-intervention with the sole increase being slight (6.00 to 6.21). Although the group average at post-intervention remains above the pre-intervention cut-off score characterizing individuals as aggressive, three individuals did score below the 5.78 mark. In addition, the group average decrease of almost a whole point represents a meaningful reduction in perceived frequency of aggressive behavior by peers. This would

correspond to a changed average peer-rating from *sometimes* to *almost never* for an individual starting physical fights.

Table 11

Results of Repeated Measures ANOVA for Participants Scoring One Standard Deviation Above the Mean on Pre-intervention Overt Aggression Subscale of RSEQ-Peer Report (n=11)

Source	SS	*df*	MS	*F*	*p*	η^2
Time	3.872	1	3.872	14.2	.004	.587
Error	2.727	10	.273			

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This study investigated the treatment efficacy of a low-cost, six session classroom intervention designed to intervene in an ecology that may condone, if not encourage, bullying. Specifically, a manualized program was developed to alter the attitudes and behaviors of children who act as bystanders to bullying incidents. Changing the behavior of bystanders has the potential to reduce overt aggression in the most proactively aggressive children by removing the active reinforcement or inaction that would typically enable the behavior. A concurrent teacher program provided education of bullying behaviors and attempted to assist in creating a teacher facilitated classroom environment that is intolerant of bullying. In combination, this multi-component program intended to alter systemic variables empirically demonstrated to affect the likelihood of overt aggression in a fourth grade classroom ecology.

It was hypothesized that following intervention, participants would demonstrate reduced self-rated attitudes approving of aggression, reduced peer-rated overt aggression, and increased peer-rated prosocial behavior. In addition, it was hypothesized that gender differences on each of the aforementioned measures in the study population would be consistent with previous research.

Results of the study supported the hypothesis of reductions in participants' peer-rated overt aggression but did not support hypotheses of reduced favorable attitudes towards aggression and increased peer-rated prosocial behavior. A supplementary analysis found that participants rated as most overtly aggressive by their peers

demonstrated significant reductions in overt aggression following intervention. Hypotheses were confirmed for gender differences in both peer-rated overt aggression and prosocial behavior. Hypothesized differences between boys and girls in attitudes towards aggression were not found.

The results of this study provide preliminary support for the Kids Supporting Kids intervention as an efficacious program for reducing overt aggression. Findings demonstrate that the program cannot yet be considered efficacious for increasing prosocial behavior or diminishing attitudes favorable to aggression. In addition, the adaptation of the Revised Social Experiences Questionnaire (RSEQ; Paquette & Underwood, 1999) for this study yielded data that supports the measure's use as a peer ratings instrument.

The most important finding from this study was the reduction in peer-rated overt aggression. The hypothesis that participants in the intervention would show a significant decrease in peer-rated overt aggression was supported. The large effect size demonstrated for the whole group change can be compared against other aggression interventions. Wilson et al., (2003) conducted a meta-analysis of school-based interventions targeting aggressive behavior using Cohen's D as a measure of effect size. Their analysis found an overall effect size of .25, which can be classified as a small effect. Thus, the large effect size present in this study can be considered promising, as it provides empirical support for the Kids Supporting Kids program as a viable intervention for reducing overt aggression.

In addition to the statistically significant change demonstrated at the group level, the supplementary analysis measuring behavioral change in the most aggressive participants is particularly encouraging. Utilizing the methodology of Crick et al., (2002), the participants rated by their peers as at least one standard deviation above the mean in overt aggression demonstrated a statistically significant decrease in peer-rated overt aggression. Perhaps more importantly, a very large effect size was demonstrated for this group (Cohen, 1977). Although some caution should be taken when interpreting these findings due to the sample size of 11, they can be considered promising nonetheless.

Reductions in overt aggression may reflect that the intended change in the classroom ecology occurred, as bystanders took increased action to stop bullying and other proactive aggression. Drawing upon the research of Lochman and Dodge (1994), successful intervention will alter the expectations of instrumentally aggressive individuals as to the utility of their aggressive behavior. Once they expect that the potential for reward is outweighed by the cost (i.e. that bystanders will intervene on behalf of the victim), they will be less likely to utilize aggression as a means for accomplishing their goals. The intended ecological change was supported qualitatively in a post-intervention definition of bullying provided by a participant. The student wrote, "Bullying - I never see it anymore, ever since kids supporting kids, kids are scared to bully others."

The hypothesis that participants would demonstrate less favorable attitudes towards the appropriateness of aggression following intervention was not supported. Participants had such low scores on the Normative Beliefs Approving of Aggression

Scale (NOBAGS; Huesmann & Guerra, 1997) at time 1 that participants in general, and girls more specifically, demonstrated higher scores at time 2. This finding may result from regression to the mean at post-intervention rather than a true change in attitudes towards aggression after participating in the intervention. The observed increase in the average score for girls may have been the result of floor effects (i.e. the extremely low scores of girls at time 1) rather than a true influence of gender.

A comparison of the correlations of scores of the NOBAGS and scores of overtly aggressive behavior in the current study and in the research of Huesmann and Guerra (1997) may also help explain the unexpectedly low scores of the NOBAGS. In the research of Huesmann and Guerra, the *general beliefs* subscale of the NOBAGS was demonstrated to be much more highly correlated with overt aggression than was present in this study. One interpretation of the lower correlations found in the current study is that participants exhibited self-serving bias when completing the self ratings of the NOBAGS. The high face validity of the items of the NOBAGS (e.g. *It is generally wrong to get into physical fights with others)* leaves little doubt for participants as to how to respond in a socially appropriate manner. Despite efforts to assure participants that their responses would remain anonymous, it is possible that raters did not acknowledge their true attitudes towards the use of aggression.

Previous research with the NOBAGS was conducted with ethnically diverse elementary-aged students from low income, urban neighborhoods (Huesmann & Guerra, 1997; Henry et al., 2000). The population of the current study differed markedly from the populations in which the measure had previously been used and may explain the lack of

meaningful results. The ethnically diverse, lower income backgrounds of participants in previous research would result in additional risk for having attitudes favorable to aggression due to exposure to social status variables including poverty, racism, and the resulting stressful impact on family members (Guerra et al., 1995). As a result, it was expected that the participants in this study, who were of middle to upper class backgrounds and attended well resourced schools, would endorse fewer favorable attitudes towards aggression on the NOBAGS. When compared to the research of Huesmann and Guerra (1997), however, the lower correlations found between overt aggression and attitudes towards aggression were somewhat unexpected. It had been expected that, with the well established link in the aggression literature between attitudes and behavior, similar correlations would be present even when behavior and attitudes were less extreme.

The hypothesis that participants in the intervention would demonstrate increases in peer-rated prosocial behavior was not supported. In fact, counter to the hypothesized increase, a statistically significant reduction was found. A significant gender by time interaction reflected the steeper decline of the prosocial behavior peer-ratings for girls compared with boys. These results were surprising due to the focus of the intervention program on: 1) increasing understanding of the importance of helping others; 2) modeling by instructors of specific prosocial behaviors; and 3) providing opportunities for participants to practice prosocial interventions.

The Toronto Anti-bullying Intervention reported somewhat similar results related to prosocial behavior as the current study. Although no statistical differences were found,

following the Toronto Anti-Bullying Intervention participants showed reductions in self-reported prosocial behavior. In contrast to the results found in the current study, participants in Project LIFT, after both a classroom program and parent education program, demonstrated the intended increase in prosocial behaviors (Eddy et al., 2000). Multiple explanations are possible for the differences present between these programs. The first is that the inclusion of a parent intervention component in Project LIFT resulted in it being the only program that demonstrates true efficacy in increasing prosocial behavior. The focus of that program on increasing parent/child positive interactions could translate into increased capability for child participants to relate to their peers prosocially.

Another explanation is that differences in measurement account for the discrepant findings for prosocial behavior. Project LIFT utilized both teacher ratings and playground observations to measure change in participant prosocial behavior, whereas both the Toronto Anti-Bullying Intervention and the current study only used one method of measurement. In addition, it is possible that the items of the RSEQ-peer report that load on the *prosocial behavior* subscale did not measure potential treatment effects of the intervention. That is, of the three items on the scale used for this study, only the item, *Does this person give help to classmates who need it?,* directly addresses the focus of intervention. The items *Does this person do nice things for other classmates?* and *Does this person try to cheer up other classmates who are upset or sad about something?,* while measuring prosocial behavior in general, do not specifically measure behavioral change that may have followed the intervention. Hence, the lack of findings with respect

to improved prosocial behavior may be the result of limitations in measurement rather than an absence of true treatment effects.

Previous research has demonstrated consistent gender differences among elementary aged-children in prosocial behavior, overt aggression, and attitudes towards aggression. In this study, at pre-intervention time 1, boys had significantly higher peer-rated scores for overt aggression than girls, which is consistent with previous studies conducted with school populations (Olweus, 1993; Schwartz, Dodd, & Coie, 1993; Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). Results from this study found girls to be rated by their peers as significantly more prosocial than boys. This finding is similar to the differences found by Grotpeter and Crick (1996), in which girls were significantly more likely than boys to be nominated by their peers as prosocial. Salmivalli et al., (1996) also found elementary school aged girls to be significantly more likely to demonstrate helping behavior than boys.

The results of this study however, differed from previous research conducted with the NOBAGS with respect to gender differences. Whereas, Huesmann & Guerra found significant differences between boys and girls on attitudes towards aggression, differences were not found in the current study. The lack of gender differences in attitudes towards aggression coupled with the significant gender differences in peer-rated overt aggression, suggest that perhaps the boys in this study under-reported their true attitudes towards aggression.

Two positive outcomes from this study are the high consent rate for data collection and the promising use of the RSEQ-peer report as a peer-rating instrument.

The 92% participation rate for completing measures exceeded the proposed goal of 80%. This very high rate of participation likely resulted from two actions: 1) researchers meeting with teachers to discuss the potential benefits of the program as well as the importance of a high student participation rate; and 2) subsequent personal contact that teachers made with parents to endorse the program. The high participation rate not only resulted in a high *n* for sample size purposes, it also allowed for richer peer-ratings data.

Earlier versions of the RSEQ demonstrated empirical support for the measure as both a self-report instrument (Paquette & Underwood, 1999) and a peer nomination instrument (Crick & Grotpeter, 1995). For this study, the RSEQ was adapted to be used as a peer-ratings measure after a review of aggression studies found that peer-ratings have been called "arguably, the best method to identify bullies, aggressors, and victims" (Leff, Power, & Goldstein, 2004, p. 274). Results of the adapted version of the RSEQ-peer report as a peer-rating instrument were supported in this study as high Chronbach's Alpha coefficients were present for both the *overt aggression* and *prosocial behavior* subscales at both time 1 and time 2. Although utilizing peer-ratings provided rich data, the data collection procedure required a significant time commitment from the participating school administration and fourth grade participants. It is unlikely that younger children would be capable of rating each member of their classes in the same one hour time period used in this study.

Limitations

A primary limitation in this study is related to measurement. As discussed previously, the items of the *prosocial behavior* subscale of the RSEQ-peer report do not

closely reflect the actual helping behaviors taught and practiced in this intervention. The NOBAGS also did not make a significant contribution to the findings of this study due to the extremely low ratings of participants at pre-intervention time 1. Further, the instruments included in the study were paper and pencil measures of behaviors and attitudes of individuals; observations of social interaction patterns and classrooms processes, which were targeted for change in this intervention, were not measured. In addition to selecting a more appropriate measure of prosocial behavior, expanding the study to include observations of children's naturalistic interactions, measures of classroom level processes, and of teacher attitudes and behaviors would provide additional insight into changes that might have occurred as a result of this intervention.

The lack of follow-up data was also a significant limitation of this study. An intended third data collection that was to have occurred six weeks following the end of the intervention was cancelled due to scheduling difficulties. In interventions of this kind, maintenance of treatment effects is of great importance. The differences in overt aggression between participants in the single component Second Step program (Grossman et al., 1997) and the multi-component LIFT Program (Eddy et al., 2000) were only evident after six months. A follow-up data collection would have assisted in determining if behaviors within the classroom would return to their former levels or, alternatively, if changes following the program would be maintained or increase. One possibility is that overtly aggressive individuals would limit their aggression in the time immediately following the conclusion of the program due to their teachers and peers being attentive to it, and that their behavior would return to baseline levels as the

intervention was of less focus in their classrooms. Alternatively, the intent of the intervention was to alter attitudes towards aggression, as well as prosocial behavior and overt aggression at the individual level, by changing the classroom ecology. It can be reasoned that there would be some time delay before: 1) bystanders change their behavior; 2) aggressors recognize the lack of support from bystanders; 3) previously aggressive children are less aggressive as a result of their changed ecology; and 4) peers observe this change in order for that behavioral change to be reflected in peer-ratings. A follow-up period of at least six months would allow for the measurement of meaningful classroom ecological shifts as well as individual behavior change. Because the maintenance of treatment effects over time is a primary goal in preventive interventions, encouraging results in this study should be viewed as preliminary.

Another limitation of this study was the research design, that is, the one group, pre-, post-test without a control group design. The absence of a matched comparison school creates uncertainty as to whether the changes that occurred between time 1 and time 2 were due to the maturation of participants rather than treatment effects of the intervention. Although the decreases demonstrated in overt aggression are encouraging, they would be more powerful if compared to a matched group that demonstrated no change without intervention. In addition, it would have been useful to see if participants in a control group demonstrated the same unexpected results with increased scores on the NOBAGS and decreased peer-rated prosocial behavior on the RSEQ-peer report. It is possible that the process of rating peers had some influence on scores at time one or time two. Further, because the RSEQ-peer report was used as a peer-ratings instrument for the

first time, the validity of the RSEQ-peer report in its new form would have been strengthened if a control group had been included in this study.

It had been expected that every fourth grade student would be given parental consent to participate in the intervention. Although the 92% participation rate in completing measures is considered a strength of the study, it must be considered a limitation that the same 92% rate constituted the rate of participation in the intervention. Due to the whole group, ecological approach of the intervention, the non-participation of any members of the group limits the effectiveness of the intervention. In addition, it cannot be known which roles the non-participating students assumed in the bullying that existed in their school and if these roles influenced their non-participation.

In order to make the delivery of the intervention practical for the treatment school, some modifications were made to the manualized procedures of the program. Specifically, the intended one session per week for six weeks format was not feasible for the treatment school. Instead, the six sessions occurred over a three week period, with three sessions being delivered in the second week alone. This revised schedule, although practical for the needs of the school, did not allow for the time between sessions that was intended to allow students to practice newly learned skills. The program's manual outlines that at several points between classroom sessions students are to be provided time to reflect on the previous lesson and write down thoughts, concerns, or incidents in which they were able or unable to enact the skill that was taught. These "times of reflection" did not occur during the program at the intervention school and it is unclear what practical effect this might have had. The need to alter the program to fit time

constraints of the school is not unusual, as a common mistake made by schools when implementing bullying prevention programs is "watering down" or eliminating program components (Whitted & Supper, 2005). Although some encouraging findings were present in this study, it would be informative to replicate the program in its intended form to determine if differences in treatments effects would be present.

This study was conducted in a middle to upper middle class, predominantly Caucasian elementary school. One unexpected demographic statistic was that 91.7% of participants lived with both parents at the time of this study. The percentage of intact families is not only higher than the national average, but also differs from the populations of previous aggression interventions (Olweus, 1991; Pepler et al., 1994). As a result, the findings of this study may not be generalizable to schools with diverse ethnic populations, nontraditional family structures, or lower socio-economic background. In order to determine the effectiveness of Kids Supporting Kids with other populations, an important future step will be the implementation of this program with fourth grades in school districts of differing demographics. Specifically, because the empirical link between the likelihood of aggression and poverty has been well established, a lower resourced school district would be particularly appropriate for replication of this study.

A final limitation of this study was the lack of a parental intervention component to complement the school-based program. The differences found in follow-up overt aggression between the programs Project LIFT (Eddy et al., 2000) and Second Step (Grossman et al., 1997), can be attributed to the parent education program that was added in Project LIFT. This parent program assisted parents in reducing negative reinforcement

interactions with their children and increase positive interactions. Whereas differences between the treatment and control groups disappeared in the Second Step program at six month follow-up, differences remained after three years for those in the treatment group in Project LIFT. The differences evident between the results of Project LIFT and Second Step at follow-up lend support to ecological theories of aggression, as the link between parenting practices and childhood aggression is well established and indicates the added benefit of including intervention at the level of family. A future extension of the Kids Supporting Kids program should include a parental or family component in order to address a critical microsystem that influences children's attitudes and behavior.

Implications of Research Findings

In recent years, increased focus has been placed on the importance of utilizing evidenced-based interventions in schools. To achieve this designation, interventions must provide specific information regarding their application in practice and demonstrate efficacy under the conditions specified for implementation (Kratochwill & Shernoff, 2003). Through the use of a treatment manual and demonstrated evidence for reducing overt aggression, the Kids Supporting Kids program offers promise as an evidence-based intervention. The Kids Supporting Kids six session classroom program coupled with a teacher component yielded reductions in participant overt aggression, particularly among those students who were the most overtly aggressive. Although this intervention focused more on intervening with proactive forms of aggression including bullying, it likely would be successful in intervening with reactively aggressive children as well. As bystanders become more aware and less tolerant of aggressive behavior, those students

who are aggressive following perceived provocation can be brought to the attention of teachers and school personnel for more appropriate intervention.

This study meets the stringent criteria developed by Kazdin (1993) for justifying the implementation of interventions intending to treat aggressive behaviors. Specifically, Kazdin states that treatment programs must have theoretical rationale, empirical support, and outcome evidence that demonstrates change on clinically relevant measures. Using this framework, the Kids Supporting Kids program can be considered a justifiable program for overt aggression intervention. During the development of the treatment manual, the authors reviewed the current bullying literature and integrated tenets of social-ecological theory (Swearer & Espelage, 2004) and social information processing theory (Crick & Dodge, 1994) into the intervention. Social-ecological theory provided the foundation of the program's multi-component design of targeting the multiple levels of classroom and teachers in the school ecology for change. Social-information processing theory posits that proactive aggression results from a belief in the utility of the behavior as a means of accomplishing an individual's goals. Aggressors are believed to weigh social cues against social goals and consider the probable outcome of their behaviors. Thus, removing perceived reward for aggressors became a critical goal for the intervention. Integrating the two theories, Kids Supporting Kids targeted the existing reinforcement provided to aggressors within the ecology of the school context. In total, at the end of the intervention teachers and bystanders were believed to be less likely to lend tacit or overt support to negative conduct and more likely to disapprove and intervene on the behalf of victims.

The design of this research study sought to meet the remaining criteria advanced by Kazdin by utilizing empirically supported measures to demonstrate evidence of treatment effects. The NOBAGS and the RSEQ-peer report were chosen to serve as the measures for this study due to their empirical support in previously published studies (Crick & Grotpeter,1995; Huesmann & Guerra, 1997; Paquette & Underwood, 1999). As discussed previously in this chapter, although the RSEQ-peer report was adapted to be used as a peer-ratings measure for this study, strong support was demonstrated for this approach. The outcome evidence for the overt aggression data demonstrated meaningful change.

Other school-based, multi-component programs have focused upon altering classroom ecologies as a means of reducing bullying and aggression (Olweus, 1993; Pepler et al., 1994; Eddy et al., 2000). In particular, three of these programs have demonstrated encouraging treatment effects; however, obstacles exist for their implementation in American schools. The Bullying Prevention Program and Project LIFT would likely meet the criteria advanced by Kazdin, however each program comes with significant cost and policy prioritization that would likely be prohibitive for many schools. While pragmatic for implementation in schools, the emphasis of the Toronto Anti-Bullying Intervention was on service delivery rather than methodological rigor. The absence of a treatment manual and consistent intervention amongst participating schools does not allow for clear empirical findings or replication. The limitations of these established aggression programs are not uncommon, as one of the primary challenges of utilizing evidence-based interventions in schools is ensuring that programs achieve both

effectiveness and feasibility (Kratochwill & Shernoff, 2003). The Kids Supporting Kids program achieves empirical support while also acknowledging current practical issues including limited class time and funding.

The results of this study provide researchers, educational policy makers and administrators with preliminary evidence on the effectiveness of a school-based, short term, cost-effective bullying and aggression reduction program. The existence of a treatment manual and an innovative method of ensuring treatment fidelity allows for replication of this program. An additional interesting question to be explored is whether this program is effective for the prevention of the onset of future aggression and violence as well. The research on the developmental course of youth aggression indicates that the value of an effective preventive intervention for such a significant societal issue as youth violence cannot be overestimated. When considering the potential for future acts of violence, it is important to note that it is not only the currently aggressive children who are at risk for committing such acts, but also those who are experiencing harassment and victimization within their schools.

Rather than waiting for an additional school tragedy to bring about a reactive response to intervene in youth bullying, programs such as Kids Supporting Kids should be proactively integrated into school programming. This position is supported by the American Psychological Association's Commission on Violence and Youth (1993) which stressed the importance of school-based prevention and intervention initiatives. The APA noted, "Not all these remedies are expensive. Even those that require considerable investment of resources are far less costly-in dollars and human capital-than the

alternative of letting violence continue to ravage our children and communities" (pg. 8). Further, provisions for safer schools within the No Child Left Behind educational policy stipulate that schools must implement violence prevention programs that have demonstrated effectiveness and be based on scientifically based research (Ed.gov, 2005*)*. With the pressing need for the establishment of systemic, school-based preventive interventions for aggression and violence, the promising findings of the Kids Supporting Kids program make a strong case for replication.

In sum, the Kids Supporting Kids program meets established criteria as a successful overt aggression intervention program (Kazin, 1993). This program has the potential to make a significant contribution to the treatment literature for both school-based bullying and preventive intervention for more extreme expressions of overt aggression.

Appendix A: Demographic Information Sheet

1. How old are you?

1. 8 years old
2. 9 years old
3. 10 years old
4. 11 years old
5. 12 years old

2. I am a:

a. boy
b. girl

3. What is your race/ethnicity?

a. Caucasian/White
b. African-American/Black
c. Hispanic or Mexican-American
d. Asian or Pacific Islander
e. Native American
f. Other _____

4. What is your family like?

a. You live with your mom
b. You live with your dad
c. You live with both of your parents
d. You do not live with your parents instead you live with _____

Appendix B: Children's Social Behavior Scale (CSBS) – peer nomination
(Not used in current study)

Subscales:
Overt Aggression: Items: 5, 14, 16
Relational Aggression: Items: 7, 10, 12, 15, 18
Prosocial Behavior: Items: 3, 6, 9, 13
Isolation Scale: 4, 8, 11, 17, 19
Sociometric Questions:
Peer Acceptance: 1
Peer Rejection: 2

1. **Like**
   Which (of the people in your class/fourth graders) do you like to hang out with the most? Find their name and number on your class list. Write down their NUMBER in the first blank next to the word LIKE. Now pick another person you like to hang out with the most and put their NUMBER in the second blank next to the number 1. Now find a third person you like to hang out with the most and put their NUMBER in the last blank next to number.

2. **Don't Like**
   Now, I want you to write down the number of someone you like to hang out with the least. You may like most of your classmates, but there may be some you like to hang out with less than others. Find the number of the person you like to hang out with the least and put their number in the blank next to number two and the words DON'T LIKE. Now find the number of another child who you like to hang out with the least and put their number in the second blank. Find a third person and do the same thing.

3. **Good Leader**
   Find the number of three kids who other students look up to and try to be like.

4. **Seems Lonely**
   Find the number of three kids who seem lonely while they are at school.

5. **Hit Others**
   Now find the numbers of three classmates on your list who hit or push others at school.

6. **Do Nice Things**
   Find the numbers of three people who say or do nice things for other classmates.

7. **Gets Even**

Find the numbers of three people, who when they are mad at a person, get even by keeping that person from being in their group of friends. EXAMPLES: 1) Say you're going to a party with some friends, and someone says "let's invite some kid", we want you to pick someone who would say "NO, I don't want to invite that kid because I'm mad at them". 2) Pick someone who would say to a kid "I'm going to the mall with my friends & you can't come, because I'm mad at you".

8. **Gives In**
Find the numbers of three people who seem to give in easily to others.

9. **Help Others**
Find the numbers of three people who give help to those who need it.

9. **Stop Liking**
Find the number of three people who let their friends know that they will stop liking them unless the friends do what they want them to do.

10. **Seems Happy**
Find the number of three people who seem to be happy at school.

11. **Ignores**
Find the numbers of three people who, when they are mad at a person, ignore the person or stop talking to them.

11. **Cheer Up Others**
Find the number of three people who try to cheer up other classmates who are upset or sad about something. They try to make them feel happy again.

12. **Start Fights**
Find the number of three kids who start physical fights with others.

13. **Keep Out**
Find the number of three people who try to exclude or keep certain people from being in their group when doing things together (like having lunch in the cafeteria or going to the movies). EXAMPLES: 1) Say you're in the cafeteria eating with your friends & someone says "lets ask that kid to sit with us" we want you to pick someone who would say "NO, I don't want that kid to sit with us". 2) Pick someone who would say to a kid "I'm going to the movies with my friends & you can't come".

14. **Mean Names**
Find the number of three people who yell or call other classmates mean names.

15. **Plays Alone**
Find the number of three people who play by themselves at school.

16. **Rumors**
Find the number of three kids who try to make another kid not like a certain person by spreading rumors about them or talking behind their backs.

17. **Seems Sad**
Find the number of three kids who seem to be sad at school

NAME: _____ I.D. # _____ GRADE: _____

TEACHER'S NAME: _____ CIRCLE: BOY GIRL

1. Like	_____	_____	_____
2. Don't Like	_____	_____	_____
3. Good Leader	_____	_____	_____
4. Seems Lonely	_____	_____	_____
5. Hit Others	_____	_____	_____
6. Do Nice Things	_____	_____	_____
7. Gets Even	_____	_____	_____
8. Gives In	_____	_____	_____
9. Help Others	_____	_____	_____
10. Stop Liking	_____	_____	_____
11. Seems Happy	_____	_____	_____
12. Ignores	_____	_____	_____
13. Cheer Up Others	_____	_____	_____
14. Starts Fights	_____	_____	_____
15. Keep Out	_____	_____	_____

16. Mean Names	_____	_____	_____
17. Plays alone	_____	_____	_____
18. Rumors	_____	_____	_____
19. Seems Sad	_____	_____	_____

Appendix C: Revised Social Experiences Questionnaire (RSEQ) – self report
(Not used in current study)

Subscales:
*Overt Victimization***:** Items: 4, 6, 12, 14, 16
*Social Victimization***:** Items: 1, 3, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15
Receiving Prosocial Acts: Items: 2, 5, 8, 10, 17
* Items added to SEQ by Paquette and Underwood (1999)

1. How often does a kid who is mad at you try and get back at you by not letting you be in their group anymore?

2. How often does another kid cheer you up when you are sad or upset?

3. How often does another kid leave you out on purpose when it is time to play or do an activity?

4. How often do you get pushed or shoved by another kid at school?

5. How often does another kid say nice things to you?

6. How often does another kid hit you?

7. How often does another kid tell lies about you to make other kids not like you anymore?

8. How often does another kid help you when you need it?

*9. How often does another kid make mean faces at you to hurt your feelings?

10. How often does another kid do something that makes them feel happy?

11. How often does another kid tell you that they won't like you unless you do what the kid says?

12. How often does another kid kick you or pull your hair?

13. How often does another kid try to keep others from liking you by saying mean things about you?

14. How often are you told by another kid that you will be beaten up if you don't do what they want you to do?

*15. How often does another kid roll their eyes or snub their nose at you?

16. How often does another kid yell at you and call you mean names?

17. How often does another kid let you know that they care about you?

Appendix D: Revised Social Experiences Questionnaire – peer report: Treatment Version

Subscales:
Overt Aggression: Items: 2, 9, 11
Prosocial Behavior: Items: 1, 3, 5, 8
Social Aggression: Items: 4, 6, 7, 10, 12, 13, 14

Read the following questions about your classmate. When answering each question only think of the past TWO WEEKS. Then circle never if in the past TWO WEEKS you have seen this person acting in the way described. Circle sometimes if in the past TWO WEEKS you have sometimes seen this person acting in the way described. Circle often if in the past TWO WEEKS you have often seen this person acting in the way described.

Name of Classmate_____

Questions

1. Do you look up to or want to be like this person?

   ☐ NEVER ☐ ALMOST NEVER ☐ SOMETIMES ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS ☐ ALWAYS

2. Does this person hit or push others at school?

   ☐ NEVER ☐ ALMOST NEVER ☐ SOMETIMES ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS ☐ ALWAYS

3. Does this person do nice things for other classmates?

   ☐ NEVER ☐ ALMOST NEVER ☐ SOMETIMES ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS ☐ ALWAYS

4. Does this person get even by keeping classmates he/she is mad at out of their group of friends?

   ☐ NEVER ☐ ALMOST NEVER ☐ SOMETIMES ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS ☐ ALWAYS

5. Does this person give help to classmates who need it?

   ☐ NEVER ☐ ALMOST NEVER ☐ SOMETIMES ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS ☐ ALWAYS

6. Does this person tell classmates he/she won't be their friend unless they do what he/she wants them to do?

   ☐ NEVER ☐ ALMOST NEVER ☐ SOMETIMES ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS ☐ ALWAYS

7. Does this person ignore classmates or stop talking to classmates when he/she is mad at a classmate?

☐ NEVER ☐ ALMOST NEVER ☐ SOMETIMES ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS ☐ ALWAYS

8. Does this person try to cheer up other classmates who are upset or sad about something?

☐ NEVER ☐ ALMOST NEVER ☐ SOMETIMES ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS ☐ ALWAYS

9. Does this person start physical fights with others?

☐ NEVER ☐ ALMOST NEVER ☐ SOMETIMES ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS ☐ ALWAYS

10. Does this person try to exclude or keep other classmates from being in his/her group when doing things?

☐ NEVER ☐ ALMOST NEVER ☐ SOMETIMES ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS ☐ ALWAYS

11. Does this person yell or call other classmates mean names?

☐ NEVER ☐ ALMOST NEVER ☐ SOMETIMES ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS ☐ ALWAYS

12. Does this person make mean faces at other classmates to hurt their feelings?

☐ NEVER ☐ ALMOST NEVER ☐ SOMETIMES ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS ☐ ALWAYS

13. Does this person spread rumors or talk behind other classmates' backs to make other people not like that classmate?

☐ NEVER ☐ ALMOST NEVER ☐ SOMETIMES ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS ☐ ALWAYS

14. Does this person roll his/her eyes at other classmates or snub his/her nose at classmates?

☐ NEVER ☐ ALMOST NEVER ☐ SOMETIMES ☐ ALMOST ALWAYS ☐ ALWAYS

Appendix E: the Normative Beliefs Approving of Aggression Scale (NOBAGS)

Normative Beliefs

Participant Number _____

1. In general, it is wrong to hit other people.

It's perfectly OK It's sort of OK It's sort of wrong It's really wrong

2. If you're angry, it is OK to say mean things to other people.

It's perfectly OK It's sort of OK It's sort of wrong It's really wrong

3. In general, it is OK to yell at others and say bad things.

It's perfectly OK It's sort of OK It's sort of wrong It's really wrong

4. It is usually OK to push or shove other people around if you're mad.

It's perfectly OK It's sort of OK It's sort of wrong It's really wrong

5. It is wrong to insult other people.

It's perfectly OK It's sort of OK It's sort of wrong It's really wrong

6. It is wrong to take it out on others by saying mean things when you're mad.

It's perfectly OK It's sort of OK It's sort of wrong It's really wrong

7. It is generally wrong to get into physical fights with others.

It's perfectly OK It's sort of OK It's sort of wrong It's really wrong

8. In general, it is OK to take your anger out on others by using physical force.

It's perfectly OK It's sort of OK It's sort of wrong It's really wrong

Appendix F: Parental Consent Form for the Participation of Minors

CONSENT FORM
Peer Aggression: Theoretical and Applied Implications

Your child is invited to participate in a study of peer aggression in schools. My name is __Pamela Schaber__ and I am a __doctoral student_ at The University of Texas at Austin, Department of _Educational Psychology. This study is part of a requirement for my Ph.D. degree. I am asking for permission to include your child in this study because children in the fourth grade are the focus of the study. I expect to have at least 80 participants for this part of the study.

If you allow your child to participate, graduate students will be working with your child. We are asking parents to allow researchers to collect information from your children regarding how they think their classmates interact with others, and how they think interact with their classmates. This information will be collected in two data collection sessions. Each data collection session will take approximately an hour during your child's school day.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with your child will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. His or her responses will not be linked to his or her name or your name in any written or verbal report of this research project.

Your decision to allow your child to participate will not affect your or his or her present or future relationship with The University of Texas at Austin or Eanes Independent School District. If you have any questions about the study, please ask me. If you have any questions later, call me at 512-577-4499. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's participation in this study, call Professor Clarke Burnham, Chair of the University of Texas at Austin Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Research Participants at 232-4383.

You may keep the copy of this consent form.

You are making a decision about allowing your child to participate in this study. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above and have decided to allow him or her to participate in the study. If you later decide that you wish to withdraw your permission for your child to participate in the study, simply tell me. You may discontinue his or her participation at any time.

PLEASE RETURN ONE COPY OF THIS PORTION TO YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER

☐ **YES** I give my permission for my child, _____, to participate in this research study and to complete the questionnaires.

☐ **NO** I do not give my permission for my child, _____, to continue any further with this research project.

_____ _____

Parent's Signature Date

_____ _____

Pamela Schaber, M.A. Date

NOTE: TWO COPIES OF THIS LETTER ARE PROVIDED; ONE IS TO KEEP FOR YOUR RECORDS

Appendix G: Assent Form

I agree to be in a study about how my classmates interact with one another. This study was explained to my (mother/father/parents/guardian) and (she/he/they) said that I could be in it. The only people who will know about what I say and do in the study will be the people in charge of the study.

In this study, I will be asked questions about how my classmates act around each other and what kind of behaviors they use when they talk/play/interact with other children in their class. I will be asked questions about each child in my class including myself. I understand that I will need to keep the answers I put down to myself and agree not to share my answers with other people. My answers will only be shared with the people in charge of the study.

Writing my name on this page means that the page was read (by me/to me) and that I agree to be in the study. I know what will happen to me. If I decide to quit the study, all I have to do is tell the person in charge.

_____	_____
Child's Signature	Date
_____	_____
Signature of Researcher	Date

Kids Supporting Kids: A curriculum-based classroom intervention for social and physical aggression

A FACILITATOR'S MANUAL

Pamela McDonald Schaber, M.A., and Daniel Hoard, M.A.

Table of Contents

Introduction

THEORETICAL ORIENTATION

This manual is designed to intervene and prevent bullying behaviors in a classroom context. Bullying is characterized as the repeated victimization of an individual through exposure to negative actions on the part of one or more other individuals (Olweus, 1991). Negative actions can take multiple forms including physical aggression, name calling, spreading rumors, social exclusion, and other behaviors designed to harm social relationships. Historically, bullying interventions have focused on bullies or victims of aggression in isolation rather than the context in which the behavior occurs. Recent research on bullying behavior has highlighted the complex social relationships involved in the maintenance of aggressive behaviors. To better understand these complex interrelationships, it is helpful to consider Swearer and Espelage's (2004) social-ecological framework of bullying (i.e. aggression). Swearer and Espelage developed their social-ecological framework of bullying in order to explain the complex relationships that exist between individuals, families, peers, schools, communities, and cultures. They specifically labeled each context of the child's life as it directly relates to bullying behavior. They started with the individual labeled as either a bully, bully-victim, victim, or bystander. Then they moved outward to the systems in which the individual directly functions: the school, the family, and the peer group. Next they included the broader systems that the family, the school, and the peer group are imbedded in: the community and the culture.

Many previous interventions have not considered the social ecology of classrooms and thus have not directly addressed the complex interrelationships involved in maintaining social aggression and aggressive behavior. Specifically, classroom intervention strategies should pay particular attention to the bystander (Carney and Merrell, 2001; Greene, 2004) and classroom attitudes regarding aggressive behavior. Given that some bullies are socially powerful and have high status, it can be difficult to persuade them to change their behavior. Therefore, the focus of the intervention should also include the classroom environment so that bullies will receive less support or status for their bullying behavior (Vaillancourt, Hymel, and McDougall, 2003). Research has shown that bullies often repeat their behaviors within classrooms that have pro-bullying attitudes (Henry et al.., 2000). In order to successfully intervene with these pro-bullying behaviors and attitudes, bystanders would benefit from becoming aware of how their actions support bullying behavior. Furthermore, research has demonstrated that bystanders do know how to intervene in prosocial ways but often choose not to because it is often easier to use aggressive behaviors or to not intervene at all (Hawkins, Peplar, and Craig, 2001). Interventions can capitalize on their existing prosocial skills and help them find ways to achieve success with prosocial behavior that does not implicitly or explicitly support

bullies (Vaillancourt et al.., 2003). By helping bystanders switch their alliance with the bully and start intervening on behalf of the victim, support for bullying will be diminished (Rodkin and Hodges, 2003).

In addition to upholding the tenets of the social-ecological model of bullying, a review of the research indicates that the following nine principles are also important components of school-based bullying interventions: 1. The intervention is founded on a theoretical perspective (Stevens et al.., 2001), 2. The intervention actively works to explain facts and dispel myths (Newman-Carlson and Horne, 2004), 3. Before the intervention, bullying behavior is assessed at a school-wide level, 4. Students develop a code of conduct (Greene, 2004), 5. Programs recognize the social context of bullying and interventions target the peer culture (Greene, 2004; Salmivalli, 2005; Stevens et al.., 2001; Valillancourt et.al., 2003), 6. The intervention employs systemic approaches (Stevens et.al., 2001), 7. Strategies are implemented that work for all types of aggression (Smith and Ananiadou, 2003), 8. Students learn to identify bullying behavior in each other (Greene, 2004), and 9. Students are held accountable for their actions and there is a school-wide plan for how to handle bullying situations (Greene, 2004; Stevens et al.., 2001).

In conclusion, it is expected that school-based interventions that include all children, victims, bystanders, and bullies alike, will help create environments where the school actively promotes intolerant attitudes toward bullying. In addition, the inclusion of teachers in the intervention should better inform teachers about how to manage socially and overtly aggressive behaviors in their classrooms. Teaching the entire class how to effectively intervene with peer aggression will help students and teachers maintain positive changes and will contribute to a positive learning environment.

GOALS OF THE PROGRAM

The development of this program was informed using the social-ecological model of bullying and the nine principles for successful interventions. The goal of this program is to alter classroom ecologies that may condone, if not encourage, multiple forms of bullying. Specifically, students will learn how to use prosocial behaviors more effectively to help promote a classroom climate that is less tolerant of bullying behavior. By withdrawing their tacit or explicit support of bullying, bystanders will be promoting a more tolerant classroom. A concurrent teacher program will provide education of bullying behaviors and assist in creating a teacher facilitated classroom environment that is intolerant of bullying. In combination, the resulting multi-component program intends to alter attitudes and behaviors in order to promote tolerance toward others and prosocial behavior in the fourth grade classroom ecology.

PEOPLE IN THE PROGRAM

The facilitators for this program will be advanced school psychology doctoral students from the University of Texas. The intervention will include fourth grade students and their teachers. The intervention will take place in students' classrooms at their school during the school day. Fourth grade was chosen as the focus for this treatment manual because research suggests that the developmental trajectory of aggression indicates that as children age, they become more aggressive (Bjorkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukiainen, 1992; Eron, & Slaby, 1994; Underwood, 2003). It is thought that aggressive behaviors rapidly increase in pre-adolescence usually during the transition between elementary school and middle school. Because of this rapid escalation in pre-adolescence, it is hypothesized that early intervention will decrease the normal escalation of aggressive behavior by a marked degree.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE CURRICULUM

The Kids Supporting Kids curriculum approaches classroom interventions from a systemic standpoint. Here, the facilitators' main goals are to educate children and their teachers about the different types of bullying behaviors and the different roles assumed in bullying. Specifically, facilitators will be working with the entire classroom to develop successful strategies for intervening and preventing bullying behaviors. By the last session, children and teachers will work collaboratively to write a classroom code that reflects their collective responsibility to intervene when bullying occurs and promote prosocial behavior. The curriculum is designed to be six weeks long, with each meeting lasting one hour.

CURRICULUM

Session 1 – Defining Bullying

- Discuss different ideas about bullying, helping dispel myths
- Introduce the different types of bullying
- Have children think of real life examples
- Discuss what children are hoping to gain from the program and how they view bullying in their school currently

Session 2 – The Consequences of Bullying

- Review last week
- Start hearing students' experiences of bullying in their school
- Discuss the consequences of bullying for the bully, victim, and for fourth grade boys and girls
- Start helping students take the perspective others

Session 3 – The Different Roles of Bullying: Bully, Victim, Bystander

- The students learn what a bystander is and the different roles involved with bullying
- Students learn how to identify different bystander roles in bullying scenarios
- Students learn about the Support Box
- Students are encouraged to become aware of their own behavior related to bullying

Session 4 – How to Change the Bully Environment

- Students think about how they want their class to change and actions they can take to change the bully environment
- Facilitators help students become aware of attitudes that might keep the bully environment the same
- Facilitators role play students ideas
- Students brainstorm ideas about how bystanders in particular could behave differently in bullying scenarios creating a more positive outcome for everyone

Session 5 – Practicing How to Make a Difference

- Students role play bystander interventions

Session 6 – Moving Towards a Bully Free 4th Grade

- Students will review previous five sessions
- Students will write a code of conduct and sign it
- Students will practice problem solving bullying situations as a class
- Everyone will say goodbye

The following sessions are designed specifically for the teachers to provide a forum for discussion as well as to help enable teachers to enforce and promote classroom behavior change.

Check-ins

- Keep in touch with teachers
- Answer questions that teachers might have
- Provide consultation to the teachers for bullying incidents
- Encourage teacher involvement and maintain an ongoing dialogue between facilitators and teachers.

First Teacher Forum (before intervention)

- Introduce the intervention
- Give teachers an overview of the next six weeks
- Introduce the intervention checklists

- Introduce the Support Box to teachers and prepare them for the role they will have once researchers leave
- Solicit feedback and questions
- Informally assess teacher attitudes toward bullying

Second Teacher Forum (after third intervention session)

- Review first three student sessions
- Continue to prepare teachers for the role they will have once researchers leave
- Answer any questions teachers may have
- Solicit Feedback

Third Teacher Forum (after intervention)

- Review student intervention
- Answer any questions teachers may have
- Finish preparing teachers for the role they will have once researchers leave
- Brainstorm problems
- Say goodbye

Part I

Part I: Session Instructions

Session

This section provides detailed guidelines on how to conduct the Kids Supporting Kids curriculum. Each session lesson includes the goals for the session, necessary materials, an outline, and specific instructions as to how to use the activities in the session. Facilitators will review the sessions prior to administration for each meeting. Each session is accompanied by a checklist that lists the objectives to be covered each group meeting. This checklist should be completed by the observing classroom teacher during each session (checklists can be found in the appendix).

Defining Bullying

Session 1

Goals

- Provide an education on the different forms of bullying
- Dispel myths surrounding previously held beliefs about bullying
- Promote awareness of bullying behavior

Materials Required

- Large Paper Easel
- Package of Markers
- 4" X 4" paper squares (three for each child in the class)
- Pencils (enough for everyone)

Session Outline

- Warm up
- Activity: Bullying in your school
- Closing/Homework

Homework

- Try to be aware of bullying in your school (physical and social).

Warm Up (15 minutes)

Introduce yourself as well as the other facilitator. As you introduce yourself mention how you became interested in bullying and describe an incident in which you were involved in bullying. Be sure that in this incident you were involved as a bystander.

Once introductions have been made, discuss confidentiality and expectations (6wk program, for one hour a week). Next, define the purpose for the group and explain the goals of the program. Assure the children that everything said in group will not get them in trouble with their teacher or parents (what is said in the group stays in the group). They should all feel like they can speak freely without having to worry about consequences. Discuss group rules: 1. one person talking at a time, 2. respectfully considering all ideas, (i.e. no laughing at others, etc…). 3. Make sure to emphasize that when children are sharing stories about bullying that they are NOT to use names in order to help protect involved parties from being teased during or after the group. Acknowledge that we understand how different this might be from their normal day and we want them to have fun, but also tell them that we have a lot to cover and we need to stay on topic and stay focused. Ask them if they can think of any other rules that might

be important to them. FACILITATOR NOTE: if one student in particular is continuously disruptive and cannot follow the rules, refer the problem to the teacher.

Introduce the warm-up activity by discussing as a group what everyone thinks bullying is. Hand out sheets of paper and ask the students to write on the sheet what they think bullying is? What kind of behaviors do they think are bullying behaviors? After the students have written down their responses have them hand them back in. Then open up discussion with the large group asking them to share their ideas about different bullying behaviors. As the group responds, the facilitators should organize responses on the paper easel. Be sure to divide the sheet into two columns (but DON'T put headings on the columns). Have one column represent physical/overt aggression responses and the other represent social aggression responses. Be prepared to help guide students in making the list. Make sure to include the following behaviors:

- Physical/Overt Aggression
    - Hitting/kicking
    - Pushing
    - Calling people names to their face
    - Threats
    - Teasing
    - Throwing something at someone
- Social Aggression
    - Eye rolling
    - Ignoring someone
    - Excluding someone from your group
    - Spreading rumors
    - Make mean faces
    - Making people do what you want by threatening to not be their friend

After the group is done and everyone has had an opportunity to respond, label the columns and then explain the different types of aggression (physical and social). Talk about social behaviors often happen behind someone's back while physical behaviors often happen to the person's face. Mention that everyone might do these things once in awhile like hit their sister once because they were really mad, but bullying behavior is different because it would happen over time, repeatedly to the same person. So if someone was hitting their sister all the time to get what they want, then they would be engaging in bullying behavior. Bullying behaviors help kids get what they want. Be sure to talk about how all kids experience bullying. At this point talk about how all kids have probably been victimized or bullied at one time. Share an example in your life if necessary. Normalize the experience while at the same time recognizing that even though everyone has bullied, it doesn't mean it is the best way to help kids meet their goals and get what they want. Can they think of examples of how bullying behaviors can help kids get what they want? Next, explain that the reason we want to do these groups to help kids understand why bullying occurs and how they can stop it.

Activity: Examples of Bullying in your school (25 minutes)

After discussing the different types of bullying behaviors, hand out the paper squares and pencils to each student. Introduce the activity by explaining that we really want to know what happens at their school as we are interested in what their experiences have been. Explain that we want kids to come up with an example of bullying that they can think of. Let them know that we will be using their examples later on. Be sure to assure them that when examples are read to the classroom we will change the example or combine examples so that incidents are not easily recognizable to everyone. Next, explain that on one sheet of paper they should write an example of physical aggression and on the other they should write an example of social aggression. Encourage them to write down something that really happened rather than making something up. Make sure to remind them to use fake names and again assure them that we will alter responses so that they are still realistic but not recognizable. (Only allow approximately five minutes for them to jot down responses, encourage them to write the first thing they think of rather than take a long time thinking of something. If they can't think of anything, that is okay). When they are done, have them hand the squares into a facilitator. Tell the children that you are going to use their examples later in the program and thank them as well.

After you have collected the sheets, start a discussion with the children by asking them how hard it was to think of an example. Was it easier to think of an example involving physical example? Or social aggression? Do they think one or both are a problem at their school? Would they like it to be different? How would it be different? (Here you want to see what the children's ideas might be about what the next five weeks are going to be like. Is there anything in particular they are hoping to gain from the program?) If it were different could they imagine what that would be like? Try to encourage everyone to participate. FACILITATOR NOTE: some of these ideas might be included in the code of conduct in the end. Make sure to write them down so that they can be revisited later.

Closing (10 minutes)

In closing, ask the children what they have learned today, if anything. What did they like the best about the session? The least? Summarize the different definitions of bullying as well as the main ideas from the discussion following the activity.

Homework

Ask the children to try and be aware of bullying behavior this week. Can they find incidents of physical bullying and social bullying? Let the kids know that next week we will talk as a group about what they noticed. The goal of this homework is to help increase their awareness.

Consequences of Bullying

Session 2

Goals

- To review session 1.
- To have kids generate ideas about the consequences of bullying for kids who bully, kids who are victimized and for fourth grade boys/girls.
- To help kids start to take the perspective of others.

Materials Required

- Large Paper Easel
- 5 Packages of Markers
- 3-4 large sheets of butcher paper (with the ven diagram on it)
- 2 slips of paper per student with the homework prompt written on each slip (in bold below) (to hand to teacher at end of lesson)
- Role play (use student examples from previous session)

Session Outline

- Warm up
- Activity: Brainstorming the Consequences of Bullying
- Closing/Homework

Homework

- Try to be aware of bullying and start thinking about what it's like to engage in bully behaviors and what it is like to be victimized.

Warm Up

Ask students what they remember from the previous session. Facilitators expand upon their answers and fill in anything they missed from the objectives of session 1.

Review Homework (5 minutes for warm up and review)

Review the homework from the last session. Ask for volunteers to share incidents they witnessed without using real names. Facilitators should attempt to have examples shared of both physical and social bullying.

Activity: Brainstorming the Consequences of Bullying (40 minutes)

FACILITATOR NOTE: To prepare for this session, it will be necessary to have a piece of butcher paper for each group with a ven diagram on it. The ven diagram will of course

have three circles on it. One circle will be labeled, "The Person who Bullies." Another circle will be labeled, "The person who is victimized," and the third circle labeled, "Fourth grade students who witness bullying."

Have the students break into four groups with approximately 4-5 students per group. Each group will be provided with one piece of butcher paper with the ven diagram on it and markers. Facilitators will introduce the lesson by explaining to students that the day's topic is consequences of bullying and how bullying behaviors make children feel. Also, be sure to explain the ven diagram and how the circles have their own space and shared space. Then the facilitator will read two bullying scenarios to the class, one physical and one social, (have a scenario created beforehand that represents actual realities that the students have discussed). Instruct students to then put on their paper, how they think the person who bullies feels, how they think the person who is victimized feels, and how would they feel if they witnessed this incident. Explain to them how some feelings might be shared between two or even all three groups. Facilitators will float between groups providing assistance by ensuring the task is understood, scaffolding, and keeping students on task.

After approximately 20 minutes, or when students have completed the task, discuss as a large group student responses with facilitators writing ideas on the easel. Facilitators will add any important missing ideas.

- The Person who is Victimized:
    - Sad
    - Lonely
    - Isolated
    - Bad about themselves
    - Like no one likes them
    - Angry
    - Frustrated
    - Worried
    - Scared

- The Person who bullies:
    - Powerful
    - Like everyone likes him/her
    - Lonely
    - That bullying is the only way to get what they want
    - They may feel stuck in their "role"
    - May feel bad about themselves (be sure to dispel myth here that ALL bullies have low self-esteem)
    - Frustrated
    - Mad
    - Sad

- Fourth grade students who witness the incident:
    - Sad
    - Scared
    - Mad
    - Upset
    - Worried that it would be them next
    - Anxious
    - Unsafe
    - Unsure how to react if your friend is involved
    - Frustrated

Then convene back into a large group and discuss everyone's responses. While doing this create a master Ven diagram that combines the different groups' ideas. After completing ask the students, "Has bullying changed now that you are in the fourth grade? Is it different from last year? From Second Grade? What makes it hard to be a fourth grade boy/girl?" FACILITATOR NOTE: some of these ideas might be included in the code of conduct in the end. Make sure to write them down so that they can be revisited later.

Closing (5 minutes)

In closing, ask the children what they have learned today, if anything. What did they like the best about the session? The least? Summarize discussion by talking about how bullying affects everyone. Re-emphasize that bullying doesn't just have consequences for the person who is victimized.

Homework

Ask the children to again try and be aware of bullying behavior this week. **What happened? What would it be like to be the person who bullies? The person who is victimized?** Students should try and be aware of what's it like to be each of the children involved in any incidents. If they personally are involved, they should think about what it would be like to be the other people in the incident. The goal of this homework is to help increase their awareness of bullying and the perspectives of others. Let children know that their teacher will ask them to write down their ideas at two different times before our next meeting. Be sure to tell them that everyone will need to contribute a written idea so they want to make sure they keep their eyes out. Let them know that the best ideas will be read out loud during our next session!

Different Roles in Bullying: Bully, Victim, Bystander

Session 3

Goals

- To introduce the concept of bystander
- To define bystander and the different types of bystander behavior
- To help students learn how to identify the different roles in bullying
- To introduce the Support Box.
- To help students become aware of their own behavior and roles in bullying

Materials Required

- Large paper easel
- Package of markers
- 5 student examples of bullying from session 1
- Support Box

Session Outline

- Warm Up/ Review homework
- Introduce and Define bystander role
- Define different types of bystanders
- Name that role exercise
- Closing

Homework

- Pay attention to the role you take in bullying. Start putting bullying incidents in the Support Box.

Warm Up

Ask students what they remember from the previous session. Facilitators expand upon their answers and fill in anything they missed from the objectives of session 2.

Review Homework (5 minutes for warm up and review)

Review the homework from the last session. Ask for volunteers to share their experiences. What was it like to put themselves in the shoes of the person who bullied, the person who was victimized, or others involved? Also look at the students' written responses before the session and pick out a few that really stand out to read out loud to the students.

Activity 1: Defining the bully, the victim, and the bystander (20 minutes)

For this activity, the facilitator will mostly be lecturing to the students. While explaining the different roles, be sure to write on the easel the different behaviors included for each role so that kids have a visual to follow along with. The lecture should include the following: "After our last two meetings, it seems like everyone here knows what bullying behavior is. A person who bullies harms other through a lot of different ways in order to get what they want. Remember we talked about pushing/hitting, calling names, spreading rumors, etc… A person who is victimized is someone who is targeted and/or harmed by bullying behavior. The target of the bullying might be the person who gets hit/pushed, who is called names, or who the rumor is about. There is also another role in bullying, that kids might know less about, called the bystander. Bystanders are kids who are not engaging in bullying behaviors or who are not being victimized, but they are present when bullying occurs. Facilitator should remind students of the story that was shared in session 1, noting that the role the facilitator assumed during the incident was bystander. Facilitators should explain that there are several different types of bystanders. For example, they might see someone getting hit or pushed and then not do anything or walk away, or they see a kid getting teased and do nothing. It might seem like they are not involved, but this type of behavior is called an outsider bystander. Even when kids don't do anything they are supporting bullying. How do you think this type of response supports bullying? How does this behavior encourage the bullying behavior? Be sure to discuss with the kids how people who bully might perceive non-action as acceptance or how they know they can get away with their behavior. What might this mean for how they would like their fourth grade to be? Take this opportunity to brainstorm about behaviors kids might want to stop so their ideas can later be included in the student code of conduct.

Another example is bystanders may hear a rumor that they didn't start but then they gossip about the new rumor, helping to spread it around the school, or they may help catch the person that is running away from the person who wants to bully them. This type of bystander is called an assistant bystander. How do you think assistants help bullying? How does assisting when bullying occurs encourage bullying behavior?

The third example is when bystanders may laugh when someone gets called a name, or they may egg on bullying by encouraging a fight. This is because when kids laugh or clap when bullying occurs they are reinforcing bullying behavior. What are some other ways kids can reward bullying behavior?

Bystanders can also be the kid who tries to stop the bullying or who tries to help the victim. This type of bystander is called the Defender. How do you think defenders influence bullying? Do you think they encourage or discourage bullying? How could assistants, outsiders, and reinforcers become defenders? Why would they want to? What are the risks? We will be spending the next two session talking about defenders.

Activity 2: Identifying the different roles (10 minutes)

Next tell children that you are going to be reading some of the examples of bullying that they wrote down the first session. You want to use their examples so that the group is always talking about interactions that really occur at their school. Have five examples picked out beforehand making sure to get a good representation of the different bystander roles. You may have to add to the examples. Read the different examples one by one, stopping after each to ask the kids to identify the role for each child in the example. Be sure to write down the examples so the students have a reference of the names and can remember what happened. Once students have identified the appropriate role ask them how the individual influenced or contributed to the bullying.

Closing (5 minutes)

In closing, ask the children what they have learned today, if anything. What did they like the best about the session? The least? Summarize discussion by going over the chart created on the easel defining the different roles.

Homework (10 minutes)

Ask the children to again be aware of bullying happening around them, but this time to think what role they are playing. Are they an outsider? An assistant? A defender? A reinforcer? A victim? A bully? Encourage them to start to self-evaluate their behavior and their role in bullying at their school. Remind them of the expanded definition of bullying and all the behaviors it includes. It is not just taking lunch money, etc… In addition, introduce the Support Box. Explain to students that you are going to be leaving a Support Box in each of their classrooms. They will be asked by their teachers to write down bullying episodes that they see and put them in the box. Their teachers will ask all of them to write something down twice a week just like we had them do last week. Be sure to encourage them to write down an episode where they were the bystander, and they didn't know what they could do differently to be a defender. Let them know that we can brainstorm ideas in the next session. We will of course leave out names so that their responses are confidential. Also make sure to explain that incidents involving physical harm or serious threats to another student (give examples) should be reported immediately to a teacher or counselor and NOT put in the Support Box.

How to Change the Bullying Environment

Session 4

Goals

- Have students think about how their class can be different and how they can change the bullying environment
- Have them come up with ideas about specific behaviors
- To continue to address beliefs or ideas that bullying behaviors are acceptable or that nothing can be done
- Provide a chance for the facilitators to model the appropriate bystander interventions using students' ideas

Materials Required

- Large paper easel
- Package of markers
- Incidents from Support Box (look in box and divide up incidents among the groups)
- Two bullying scenarios including bystander roles (facilitators should make some up in case there are not any scenarios in the Support Box)
- Support Box

Session Outline

- Warm Up / Review Homework
- Brainstorming Session
- Facilitator Role Play
- Closing

Homework

- Come up with specific situations that would be especially difficult to take positive action.

Warm Up

Review session 2 and 3 going back over the consequences of bullying and the different roles involved in bullying. Then tell the students: "Now that you know the consequences of being a bully/victim/bystander and the challenges and pressures of being a 4th grade boy/girl, we are going to talk about how things can change and hopefully be better/easier, but first we would like to hear your ideas. At our first meeting you mentioned (refer to answers to questions in first session closing). Now that you know more, do you have more ideas?" Write down students' ideas on the large easel. FACILITATOR NOTE:

some of these ideas might be included in the code of conduct in the end. Make sure to write them down so that they can be revisited later.

Review Homework (Warm up and review should take 5 minutes)

Review the homework from the last session. Have the children bring to mind the different roles they found themselves in over the course of the week. As they are thinking about how they contribute to bullying, read out loud an incident from the Support Box (or a made up incident that combines a bunch of examples so that they are not recognizable). After reading the incident, have the students identify the different roles in the example, labeling the specific bystander roles. Ask why they answered the way they did. What clued them in? What behaviors did they notice? Explain that today we are going to be talking about how bystanders can respond in bullying situations.

Activity 1: Facilitator Role Play (35 minutes)

Have facilitators role play a bullying incident that demonstrates both physical and social aggression and that includes bystanders, but choose an example where the bystander was inactive. Have the kids identify the different roles in the example. Ask the students if the kids in the example should have acted differently. Try to help them focus on the bystander. If they have ideas about the students in the example who were victimized or bullied, great! But make sure to get plenty of bystander interventions as this will be the focus of the session. If necessary remind them how the bystanders keep bullying fueled and by stopping support, they can change their environment. Bystanders have the power to create change. Then facilitators can role play their ideas, changing the outcome of the bullying. After role play discuss with students how each involved player might feel differently after the "intervention." How did the example student behavior help or hurt their ideas about a better 4th grade environment? If they think the behaviors should have been different ask them if they have ideas about how the students in the example could have acted differently. Write these down on the easel as well. If they do not think the behaviors should have been different, lead a discussion on how the example behaviors were harmful by revisiting the consequences of bullying. Really emphasize how the students are in control. They are the ones that can make the decision to improve their 4th grade class. Remember the points they made about how they would like the 4th grade to change. Encourage them to think about how the example behaviors keep them stuck. Then re-ask how could the student's behavior have been different? Write down their ideas.

-Example Behaviors

- Stay calm.
- Tell a teacher or counselor.
- Tell involved parties in a firm voice to stop.
- Stand by the victim.
- If don't know what to do, put incident in Support Box

- Walk away
- Get a friend to help you stand up to the person who is bullying, letting the person who is bullying know behavior will not be tolerated

Facilitators might need to help them come up with appropriate behaviors. Facilitators should make sure there are a range of positive behaviors listed and help steer students in positive intervention directions. Be sure not to give them answers but help scaffold the discussion so that they are able to generate a list of alternative behaviors that would be realistic and helpful. At this point, review their ideas and talk about how realistic they are. Can these behaviors really be done? Go through each idea and discuss what would happen if they really were to do this. Facilitators should share that depending on the situation or who is involved, one choice might be more appropriate than the other. Help them identify appropriate situations for each choice. If there are ideas on the list that are really unrealistic or inappropriate make sure to give positive recognition for supplying the idea and encourage them to think of a more appropriate response using similar ideas.

Closing

Turn the easel to the intervention ideas they came up with. Hand out paper and pencil to each student and ask them to write down a bullying incident that they think is particularly challenging. Can they think of a situation in which they would not know what to do differently? Or can they think of a situation in which they would not really want to intervene even though they know they should? Be sure to empathize with them, letting them know that we know there will be times that it will be hard for them to take action, like when it is their best friend that is acting like a bully. Write it down and hand it in. Remind them again that we really want to know what it is like for them at their school and so really want their ideas to use in future sessions. Their responses are confidential and be sure to thank them.

Homework (closing and homework: 10 minutes)

Remind them that their teachers will continue to ask them to put bullying incidents that occur in the Support Box. Also encourage them to write down scenarios they might think of over the course of the week that would be challenging or hard for them to act and put those in the Support Box as well.

Practicing How to Make a Difference

Session 5

Goals

- Give students the opportunity to practice their bystander interventions from the previous session
- Talk about the reality of trying their bystander interventions when not in session
- Continue to encourage and support change
- Continue to encourage Support Box additions

Materials Required

- Large Paper Easel
- Package of Markers
- Pens
- Paper

Session Outline

- Warm Up
- Prepare for role play – small group
- Act out role plays
- Large group discussion
- Closing

Homework

- Practice interventions throughout the week. Continue to submit incidents to the Support Box.

Warm Up

Review the previous session and the important role of the bystander in intervening with bullying. Revisit the intervention ideas listed on the easel. Leave the easel open to intervention ideas for the activity.

Review Homework (Five minutes)

Review the homework from the last session. Thank them for their Support Box contributions and let them know that their ideas are included today.

Activity: Role Play in Small Groups (35 minutes)

Break students up into four small groups. Using the chart made on the first day of different physical and social aggressive behaviors, give each group one behavior from each type of aggression (e.g. group one would get rumor spreading and hitting). Tell the students that they are going to create a role play using these behaviors. Encourage them

to use all the different roles we discussed (bully, victim, defender, outsider, assistant, and reinforcer). Let them know that they are welcome to act their role play out two different ways. One where the bystanders stay in their roles of support and then changing it so that the bystanders are no longer supporting the behavior and are instead acting like defenders. Once groups are formed, have them separate as much as possible in the classroom. Once they have come up with ideas, have them practice their role play within the small group. Facilitators should float around the room facilitating the process. It will be important to keep students on task and to help them problem solve any difficulties (such as whose idea will be used. Be sure to remind them that all ideas can be included). After each group has had an opportunity to create their role play (with the various responses so that their play might have multiple different endings) give each group the opportunity to act out their play in front of the large group. Facilitators can be any role the group doesn't want to be (i.e. the bully or the victim). Be sure to congratulate and provide positive reinforcement for their creative ideas. After each group has shared, lead a discussion about the process. Was it hard to come up with ideas? What would make it hard to take action? Can they picture themselves doing this in real life? At the end provide a brief recap of their ideas congratulating them as a group. (Facilitator Note: Make sure to watch time in this session to give each group an opportunity to role play for the larger group. Make sure to leave 10-15 minutes for discussion)

Closing (Closing and Homework 10 minutes)

Summarize all the important techniques students have learned today. Remind them that trying new behaviors might be really difficult at first, but with practice, they can get really good at it and will start to see change in their classroom. Make sure to take this opportunity to talk to students about how they are not alone. One bystander can make a lot of change, but a group of bystanders can make even more change and can help students feel supported. If as a group they decide to NOT tolerate bullying, then as a group they can fight it. Ask them if they can think of some ideas to include in their student code of conduct.

Homework

Encourage students to continue to try and practice bystander interventions whenever they see bullying. Remind them also to use the Support Box. All incidents in the Support Box will get discussed. Also let them know that next week's session will be different as we won't be meeting in our boy/girl groups but as classrooms instead. Both facilitators should say goodbye to the half of the group that they won't be seeing the next week.

Moving Toward a Bullying Free 4th Grade

Session 6

Goals

- To review the previous five sessions
- To have the students come up with a Code of Conduct
- To practice problem solving future bullying problems
- To say goodbye and congratulate them for their hard work

Materials Required

- Large Paper Easel
- Package of Markers
- Several sheets of Butcher Paper
- Large Poster Board
- Support Box

Session Outline

- Warm Up / Review Homework
- Review
- Code of Conduct
- Problem Solving Session
- Closing and Goodbye

Warm Up

Introduce both facilitators again. Review last week's session and all of the great bystander and bullying interventions the students came up with. Share with the class the ideas of both groups. Highlight how similar they are. Even though they haven't been together as a class, they have been working on the same things and coming up with similar ideas.

Review Homework (Five minutes or less)

Review the homework from the last session. Did anyone try anything different that they would like to share? How did it go? Did anybody have any problems? Thank them for Support Box submissions. Let them know that we are going to be talking about the Support Box later on in the session.

Activity 1: Review (10 minutes)

Lead a discussion with the class about everything they have learned from this process. For example, ask them if they remember session 1 when we talked about the different

kinds of bullying. Do this for every session and have the students try to remember what occurred and what the main ideas were for each session. This will also be an opportunity for the two half groups to exchange ideas and realize how similar their experiences were. Specifically, facilitators should remind students about the ideas they came up with regarding how they would like their fourth grade class to be different. Ideas from both groups should be shared (refer to easel). Talk about how everyone seems to want the same basic things.

Activity 2: Student Code of Conduct (15 minutes)

Introduce the student code of conduct. Inform children that they are going to use everything they have learned about how to change bullying behavior and attitudes to write a code of conduct for their class. Be sure to explain what a code of conduct is. How it is a written rule that they all vow to follow and uphold to the best of their ability. Let them know that their code of conduct will be hung up in the classroom for everyone to see. They will all get a chance to sign it demonstrating their pledge to follow the code. Let them know that the reason to have a classroom code that they all sign rather than individual contracts is that they all are going to work together to change their classroom and uphold their code of conduct. Remind them that they are not alone and that several bystanders working together will create more change and support than one bystander working alone. Tape several pieces of butcher paper to the board and start generating ideas for what the code of conduct should include. Facilitators may need to help scaffold ideas. Then on a piece of large poster board write the final agreed upon code and have the students sign.

Activity 3: Problem Solving Solutions Together (15-20 minutes)

After everyone has signed the poster board let students know that one way they are going to uphold their code is to document or report when students break the agreed upon code (or when students bully). Let them know that the Support Box is going to stay in their classroom for them to continue to have a safe and confidential way to report bullying incidents (especially those difficult incidents in which they weren't able to intervene). Every week, teachers are going to check the Support Box and will alert the class to any incidents in the box. The teacher will read the incidents out loud and then the class and the teacher will problem solve a solution together. Let students know that the class will have the opportunity to practice this.

Read out loud an incident from the Support Box (try to pick one that has bystanders if possible). Then lead a group discussion about how that bullying incident could have turned out differently. What could have been done? Can they think of a bystander intervention that would have worked? Also at this time let kids know that if they see severe forms of bullying such as kids beating up another student, or someone who keeps getting picked on, they should let the teacher know who those students are. Remind them that the Support Box is confidential and is appropriate for minor bully slips, but severe

incidents where someone is getting harmed should be reported immediately to the teacher.

Closing (5-10 minutes)

At this time, wrap up everything and thank the kids for participating. Also use this time to solicit feedback from the students. Is there anything that they found particularly helpful? Anything they wish was different? Anything they wish we had spent more time on? Anything they still have questions about? Etc… Be sure to write down their ideas on the easel for later use by the team. Let them know that they have worked really hard over the course of the past six weeks. We know it is going to be hard to uphold their code of conduct and there are going to be mistakes, but we also know that they can work together as a class to make some positive changes and to improve their 4th grade class. Say goodbye to the class being sure to let them know how much fun you have had (or something positive and truthful) and how hard it is to say goodbye. Remind them that they may be seeing you when we collect questionnaires.

Part II

Part I: Session Instructions

Teacher Program

The following program is designed specifically for teachers to provide a forum for discussion as well as to help enable teachers to enforce and promote classroom behavior change.

Email Check-ins

Goals

- Answer questions that teachers may have.
- Give teachers the opportunity to provide ongoing feedback.
- Provide teachers consultation on how to handle bullying issues that occur during the intervention.
- Encourage teacher involvement and maintain an ongoing dialogue between facilitators and teachers.

Check in Instructions

Try to swing by the teachers' classroom once a week to accomplish the tasks listed below. Try to make sure you swing by during the teachers' free period or before or after the intervention. Make sure not to bother the teacher when he/she is busy. Also be sure to encourage teachers to email you if they have any questions or feedback.

- Give them the checklist for next week's session (make sure to give them the checklist either at the end of the previous week's session or at least two days before the next session.)
- Ask teachers to review the checklist at their convenience (and email any questions or concerns)
- Ask teachers if they have any questions about next session or if they anticipate any problems
- Ask teachers if they have questions from last session
- Ask for feedback regarding last session (what did they think?)
- Also ask teachers if they have any consultation needs, specifically, if they are encountering bullying situations in their classroom that they would like to brainstorm. Be sure to let them know that you will be available by email if further consultation questions should arise.
- Take this opportunity to ask teachers if there are any noted changes in the classroom after the last session such as increased bullying, questions that students have raised, etc…

First Teacher Forum

Goals

- Introduce the intervention
- Give teachers an overview of the next six weeks
- Introduce the intervention checklists
- Introduce the Support Box to teachers and prepare them for the role they will have once researchers leave
- Solicit feedback and questions
- Informally assess teacher attitudes toward bullying

Materials Required

- Coffee and Bagels
- First Session Checklist (enough copies for each teacher)
- Handout outlining sessions

Session Outline

- Check in
- Introduce the intervention and checklist
- Solicit Feedback

Check In

Re-introduce yourself as necessary. You may have not been working with all of the teachers so make sure you know everyone's name.

Introduce the Intervention

Take this opportunity to introduce the intervention. Give teachers the handout that outlines the six sessions. Explain to the teachers what our goals are and briefly discuss the bystander approach. Next discuss with them their views and attitudes toward bullying. Do they think it is a problem? What behaviors do they notice the most in their classrooms? Ask if they have heard of social aggression? Explain if necessary. Take this opportunity to informally and discreetly assess the teachers' attitudes toward bullying.

Solicit Feedback

At this time, open up the discussion to the teachers. What do they think about our objectives? Do they buy into the need for intervention? Do they see these problems in their classroom? If teachers are expressing negative attitudes or beliefs that bullying doesn't happen at their school or that it is just a normal part of growing up, take the time to educate them further on the negative effects of bullying. Assure them that they are not

alone by explaining that many people don't think bullying is a serious problem. When discussing this make sure to take a one down approach and do not launch into expert mode! Offer to have a follow-up email or phone conversation about the implications of classroom bullying. Make sure to be continuously evaluating their degree of participation and interest in the conversation. You want to make sure you are maintaining an alliance with them by listening to and being respectful of what they have to say.

Be sure to write down any ideas teachers have for things that could be done differently. Teachers know their classroom the best so their insight could be really helpful.

Introduce the first session checklist and let teachers know that we will be asking them to fill these out during each session. Explain to them how we need these checklists to make sure we are all doing the same things in the different sessions. We need their help so they can help us make sure the students are all getting the main ideas. This way you can be assured that the boys and girls are learning the same things. Hand them out and give teachers the opportunity to review. Ask for questions and feedback. Is the checklist clear? Also talk to them about their concerns about discipline and keeping the children on task and in control. Let them know that you do not plan on interfering with how they manage their classroom and would appreciate their help in maintaining order.

Introduce Support Box and Intervention

Explain to teachers what to anticipate. Introduce the Support Box and how we are going to be placing the box in each of their classrooms after the third session. Talk to teachers about how they feel about taking five minutes of class time twice a week to have children jot down some ideas for us to put in the Support Box. It would be really helpful if the teachers could provide brief class time to do this so that all kids have the opportunity. Let them know that another reason we want to do this is that we are going to be asking them to write down bullying incidents that occur in their school so we want to make sure to reduce any stigma by making sure all kids participate. Ask for their feedback and if this is feasible. Do they have any suggestions? Ask them what they think of this. Is this going to be a problem? Do they have any concerns? Then explain to them how we are hoping to leave the Support Box in their classroom after we have left. Let them know that in the sixth session we will be asking students and teachers to generate a code of conduct for their classrooms. We will want everyone to sign it with the understanding that by doing so everyone in the class is held accountable. Then explain that the second half of the last session we will be modeling a problem solving session about a Support Box submission. Explain to them that we are hoping that they will be able to continue to do this after we have gone. It may be helpful to go into detail about our reasoning behind the Support Box (ecological focus, classroom level intervention, etc…). Ask them if this is a reasonable request. Can they picture themselves having time to do this? Do they think students will use it? Do they think it will be helpful? Let them know that their feedback is very important and that we want to take this opportunity to brainstorm with them solutions to any anticipated difficulties. Also let them know that we will be

meeting again after the intervention is over to talk about what it is going to be like when we are gone. We will have another opportunity to brainstorm ideas then. Let them know that we will be dropping by periodically to get the ideas out of the Support Box and to give them their checklists.

Closing

Summarize the main points of the discussion and let the teachers know that as they think of questions to email you and you would be happy to respond. Also let them know that if they would like more information about bullying, you would be happy to provide them with some materials. Say goodbye. Be sure to remind teachers of your continued availability through email and remind them you will be giving them the next checklist soon.

Second Teacher Forum

Goals

- Review first three student sessions
- Continue to prepare teachers for the role they will have once researchers leave
- Answer any questions teachers may have
- Solicit Feedback

Materials Required

- Support Box
- Coffee and Bagels

Session Outline

- Check in
- Review
- Solicit Feedback

Check In

Re-introduce yourself as necessary. Take this opportunity to thank teachers for emailing their questions and concerns. Take this opportunity to ask teachers if your swing by time is okay with them. Make sure you are not intruding or if there is a preferred method of interacting.

Review

Take this opportunity to review the past three sessions. Have a discussion about the different types of bullying, the consequences of bullying, and the different roles involved. Ask them if they have any questions? Take this opportunity to share with teachers what we have been trying to accomplish. Let them know what our objectives were and the main points we were trying to get across such as 1. Increasing student awareness of bullying at their school, 2. Identifying what students want to change or how they would like their fourth grade class to be different, 3. Helping students understand that bullying is not just a bully/victim problem, instead it is a classroom problem that everyone contributes to even unwittingly, 4. Setting the stage for helping students understand that the bystander is the person who can create change. If they work together they can help make their classroom a better place. Our goal is to start to change any pro-bullying attitudes that exist in the classroom.

Solicit Feedback

At this time, open up the discussion to the teachers. What do they think about our objectives? What do they think about what we have been teaching the students? Have

they observed any changes in their classrooms? Be sure to write down any ideas teachers have for things that could be done differently. Teachers know their classroom the best so their insight could be really helpful.

Closing

Summarize the main points of the discussion and let the teachers know that as they think of questions to email you and you would be happy to respond. Also let them know that if they would like more information about bullying, you would be happy to provide them with some materials. Say goodbye. Be sure to remind teachers of your continued availability through email and remind them you will be giving them the next checklist soon.

Third Teacher Forum

Goals

- Say goodbye.
- Get feedback about the intervention.
- Anticipate future concerns and problems.
- Remind teachers about Support Box procedures.
- Brainstorm any concerns.
- Impart to teachers how important their role is and their role in helping to make lasting change.

Materials Required

- Coffee and Bagels

Session Outline

- Check in
- Review
- Solicit Feedback
- Say Goodbye

Check In

Again thank teachers for emails. Address any questions that have gone unanswered or inquire if they have any additional concerns questions regarding email replies. Thank them for taking the time to respond to your emails. Also thank teachers for filling out checklists. They did such a great job and it was so helpful! Let them know that you are available for consultation for the next few months. (TBD)

Review

Review the last three sessions briefly. Remind teachers about the intervention strategies students came up with.

Solicit Feedback

Ask teachers what they thought about the students' ideas. How realistic do THEY think they are? Have they been seeing any changes? Do they have any examples where they saw students behaving differently? What is their hope for the future? Do they think this intervention has been helpful overall? Do they have any ideas or comments they would like to share? Let them know how important feedback is. There is a possibility that the intervention will be implemented school wide so any feedback will be critical for this process.

Part III

Session Checklists

Contents

Checklist for Session 1

☐ When introducing self, facilitator shared a bullying story in which he/she was involved, specifically in the bystander role.

● Facilitator discussed confidentiality and group expectations.

- ☐ A. Facilitator explicitly stated that children are NOT to use names of involved parties when discussing bullying incidents that happen at their school.
- ☐ B. Facilitator explained that what happens in this group stays in the group, gives a specific example.
- ☐ C. Facilitator explained that their will be no consequences for talking about bullying. (e.g. the teacher will not later punish a student for admitting that he/she bullies).
- ☐ D. Facilitator went over group rules.
- ☐ E. Facilitator told students that the group will meet six times for one hour.

☐ Facilitator outlined the purpose for the program by explaining to students that the group meetings are to discuss bullying and help them learn intervention strategies.

● Facilitator listed specific goals of the program:

- ☐ A. Learn about the different types of bullying.
- ☐ B. Learn how to identify bullying.
  C. Learn about the different roles in bullying (who are the players).
- ☐ D. Think about what group would want their classroom to be like, or how they would want it be different.
- ☐ E. Learn different strategies for intervention.
- ☐ F. Develop a classroom code of conduct.

- ☐ Facilitator introduced warm-up activity by asking what students think bullying is and then wrote student ideas on the easel dividing them into social and physical aggression.

- ☐ Facilitator conveyed that bullying is a goal directed behavior.

- ☐ Facilitator introduced activity and handed out paper so students could write down examples of bullying in their school.

- ☐ Facilitator led a discussion about bullying asking students what they think their school is like and how they would like it to be different.

- ☐ Facilitator closed the session by asking students what they learned.

- ☐ Facilitator summarized the different types of bullying behavior.

- ☐ Facilitator assigned homework (asked students to be aware of bullying in the upcoming week.

Checklist for Session 2

- ☐ Facilitator began warm-up by asking students to review previous session. Facilitator filled in any missing information.

- ☐ Facilitator reviewed homework by asking students if they would share examples and handed out rewards as necessary.

- ☐ Facilitator introduced activity for the day and broke students into small groups

    - ☐ A. Facilitator asked students to answer questions about the "bully".
    - ☐ B. Facilitator asked students to answer questions about the "victim".
    - ☐ C. Facilitator asked students to answer questions about "4th grade boys (girls)".
    - ☐ D. Facilitator floated from group to group during small group activity.
    - ☐ E. Facilitator led a discussion after each category (i.e. bully, victim, etc…)

- ☐ Facilitator closed the session by asking students what they learned.

- ☐ Facilitator summarized by explaining how bullying affects everyone (not just the victim).

- ☐ Facilitator assigned homework (asked students to be aware of bullying in the upcoming week and think about what it would be like to be the other people in the incident).

Checklist for Session 3

- ☐ Facilitator began warm-up by asking students to review previous session. Facilitator filled in any missing information.

- ☐ Facilitator reviewed homework by asking students if they would share examples of what it was like to think about being in another person's shoes.

- ☐ Facilitator defined the different roles (bully, victim, bystander) and wrote on the easel characteristics of each.

- ☐ Facilitator defined the different types of bystanders.

    - ☐ A. Facilitator defined and provided an example of the outsider bystander.
    - ☐ B. Facilitator defined and provided an example of the reinforcer bystander.
    - ☐ C. Facilitator defined and provided an example of the assistant bystander.
    - ☐ D. Facilitator defined and provided an example of the defender bystander.
    - ☐ E. After providing a definition and example for each type of bystander, the facilitator asked students for more examples and asked them to think about how each bystander role contributes to bullying.

- ☐ Facilitator read examples of bullying and asked students to identify the players.

- ☐ Facilitator asked students how that specific bystander behavior contributed to or influenced the bullying.

- ☐ Facilitator closed the session by asking students what they learned.

- ☐ Facilitator summarized the different roles by reviewing the chart.

- ☐ Facilitator assigned homework by asking students to think about their own behavior in bullying, which role do they play?

- ☐ Facilitator reminded students about different types of bullying (social and physical)

- ☐ Facilitator introduced the Support Box.

Checklist for Session 4

- ☐ Facilitator began warm-up by asking students to review previous sessions. Facilitator filled in any missing information.

- ☐ Facilitator asked students if they had any more ideas about how they would like their classroom to be different. Ideas were written down on the easel.

- ☐ Facilitator reviewed homework and asked students to think about the different roles they assumed in the past week. Then the facilitator read an example from the Support Box and asked students to identify the roles and how each role contributed to the bullying. Facilitator handed out rewards as necessary.

- ☐ Facilitator asked students how the children in the warm up example could have behaved differently.

- ☐ Facilitator(s) role played a bullying incident that included bystanders.

- ☐ Facilitator helped students brainstorm intervention strategies that would be appropriate for this situation.

- ☐ Facilitators wrote down student ideas about different bystander behavior on the easel making sure the following positive intervention strategies were addressed:

    - ☐ A. Stay calm.
    - ☐ B. Tell a teacher or counselor.
    - ☐ C. Tell involved parties in a firm voice to stop.
    - ☐ D. Stand by the victim.
    - ☐ E. If don't know what to do, put incident in Support Box
    - ☐ F. Walk away
    - ☐ G. Get a friend to help you stand up to bully, letting bully know behavior will not be tolerated

- ☐ Facilitator reviewed each idea and asked students how realistic each behavior would be.
- ☐ Facilitator helped students identify the different situations intervention strategies would be appropriate.
- ☐ Facilitator(s) role played solutions.
- ☐ Facilitator asked students how the different bystander behaviors might help or hurt their ideas about a better 4th grade.
- ☐ The facilitator discussed how bystanders have the power to create change Facilitator discussed with students how the players might feel differently after the intervention.
- ☐ Facilitator closed the session by handing out paper to students and asked them to think of a challenging bullying situation (i.e. a situation in which they might not know what to do, or they know they should act, but couldn't/wouldn't) letting students know their ideas will be used in future sessions.
- ☐ Facilitator reminded students about confidentiality
- ☐ Facilitator assigned homework by asking students to put bullying incidents that occur between sessions in the Support Box.
- ☐ Facilitator also encouraged students to write down any challenging situations they might think of and put them in the Support Box.

Checklist for Session 5

- ☐ Facilitator began warm-up by asking students to review the important role of the bystander in intervening with bullying and revisited the intervention ideas on the easel. Facilitator filled in any missing information.

- ☐ Facilitator reviewed homework and thanked students for Support Box contributions, letting them know their examples would be included in today's session.

- ☐ Facilitator broke students into small groups and gave them two bullying scenarios (one social, one physical).

- ☐ Facilitator asked students to write down a "play" where they act out the scenario and different bystander behaviors.

- ● For Role Play:

    - ☐ A. Facilitator asked students to role play their "play."
    - ☐ B. Facilitator played the role of the victim for each group.
    - ☐ C. Facilitator participated in each group's "play."

- ☐ Facilitator(s) floated around the room helping each small group.

- ☐ Facilitator asked students to reconvene in large group.

- ☐ Facilitator asked students from each group to share their solutions with the large group.

- ☐ Facilitator provided positive reinforcement for ideas.

- ☐ Facilitator led a discussion about the process of coming up with ideas asking if it was difficult and if it was realistic.

- ☐ Facilitator closed the session by summarizing what they learned that day (different intervention strategies).
- ☐ Facilitator reminded students how hard it is to try new behaviors.
- ☐ Facilitator reminded students they are not alone and can act together.
- ☐ Facilitator assigned homework by asking students to try intervention strategies when they see bullying.
- ☐ Facilitator also encouraged students to write down any challenging situations they might encounter and put them in the Support Box.
- ☐ Facilitator informed group that next week's meeting would be different as groups will meet in their normal class (e.g. Ms. Smith's fourth grade class).
- ☐ Facilitators said goodbye to the half of the group they will not be seeing (e.g. Ms. Jones's class).

Checklist for Session 6

- ☐ Facilitators introduced themselves.
- ☐ Facilitator reviewed bystander interventions from both groups.
- ☐ Facilitator pointed out to students how similar their ideas were and how even though they have been apart, they have been working on the same things.
- ☐ Facilitator reviewed homework from the last session by asking students if they tried different intervention strategies.
- ☐ Facilitator thanked students for Support Box submissions.
- ● Reviewed previous sessions:
    - ☐ A. Definitions of bullying and different types.
    - ☐ B. Consequences of bullying for bully, victim, and class.
    - ☐ C. Different roles in bullying.
    - ☐ D. Intervention strategies (did this in warm up so brief)
    - ☐ E. Ideas for how students want their fourth grade class to be different.
- ☐ Facilitator introduced the code of conduct and explained what it is (written rules everyone will follow).
- ☐ Facilitator talked to students about the differences between an individual contract and a group contract.
- ☐ Facilitator discussed how the class is going to work together to create change.
- ☐ Facilitator encouraged students to think about what they wanted to include on their code of conduct, being sure to scaffold responses as necessary.

Part III – Session 6 Checklist: Moving Toward a Bully Free 4th Grade

- ☐ Facilitator wrote ideas on the easel.
- ☐ Facilitator wrote the final code of conduct on a poster board.
- ☐ All students signed the code of conduct.
- ☐ Facilitators told students that the Support Box will remain in their classroom and explained how it is going to be used.
- ☐ Facilitators informed students about what kind of incidents should be reported immediately and what kind of incidents are appropriate for the Support Box, being sure to remind students of confidentiality.
- ☐ Facilitator read aloud an incident from the Support Box.
- ☐ Facilitator led a group problem solving discussion on what the people involved in the incident could have done differently.
- ☐ Facilitator closed the session by summarizing what they learned during the groups.
- ☐ Facilitator asked for feedback about what was helpful, what could be different, questions, etc...
- ☐ Facilitator wrote down ideas on the easel.
- ☐ Facilitator acknowledged how hard students have been working.
- ☐ Facilitator emphasized how hard it is going to be to uphold the code of conduct and how everyone can work together to change.
- ☐ Facilitators said goodbye and gave appreciations.

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